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NOVEMBER MEETING.

THE stated meeting was held on Thursday, the 10th instant, at three o'clock, P.M. The first Vice-President, Mr. RHODES, occupied the chair.

The record of the last meeting was read and approved.

The Librarian reported the following accessions:

From Mrs. Helen Bigelow Merriman, drawings, specifications and correspondence of her father, Erastus Brigham Bigelow, 1831-1879, relating to his inventions, his diary, 1847-48, and extracts from the private journal of Alexander Wright, 1845-50.

From Mrs. Barrett Wendell, some papers of John and Jacob Wendell, of Portsmouth, N. H., 1755-1837, several blotters relating to the estate of Samuel Pray, 1832-1837, and two account books of Jacob Wendell, 1810-28.

From Walter Eliot Thwing, by deposit, his manuscript account of "Ships and Shipping in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century" directed by his father, Supply Clap Thwing, a merchant of Boston, together with biographical sketches of him and of those associated with him.

The Cabinet-Keeper reported the following accessions:

From Freeman Thorp, of Hubert, Minn., a photograph of his painting of Abraham Lincoln, which hangs in the corridor of the Senate at Washington, also a photograph of his own original sketches of Lincoln at Geneva and at Gettysburg.

From Dr. J. Collins Warren, a lithograph of the certificate given to Mrs. G. H. Shaw, a contributor to the New England Sanitary Commission Fair held in Music Hall, Boston, December 14, 1863, for the benefit of the sick and wounded soldiers, printed by L. Prang & Co., Boston; also six colored lithographs of costumes in France in the time of Louis XIV and XV.

From Senator Frederick Hale, of Maine, a lithograph by Pendleton, showing a "View of the Prison Yard and Building" and a "Plan of Mass. State Prison and Grounds" by William Austin.

From Miss Emma Lovell Loring, a water-color sketch of Washington's Tomb, June, 1828.

From Grenville H. Norcross, a lithograph by J. Curtis, New York, the "Massachusetts Baby Show"; and two lithographs by Bufford, 1862, one "The Secession Bubble, It Must Burst," and the other "I'm not to blame for being white, Sir," showing a portrait of Charles Sumner.

From Miss Sally F. Shaw, two pencil sketches of Prince Pierre Napoleon Bonaparte, cousin of Emperor Napoleon III, June 18, 1837.

From George L. Hamilton, Jamestown, R. I., insignia of the Order of Isabel Maria Louise of Spain.

From Hon. Warren A. Reed, a souvenir medal struck to commemorate the centennial of the city of Brockton, June, 1921, by the Brockton National Bank.

From Dr. W. Sturgis Bigelow, three five-cent pieces in the mint state.

From William B. Revere, of Canton, by deposit, a bookplate of Paul Rivoire, father of Paul Revere.

The Corresponding Secretary reported the receipt of a letter from William Bennett Munro, of Boston, accepting his election as a Resident Member of the Society, and one from George Burton Adams, of New Haven, Conn., accepting his election as a Corresponding Member of the Society.

Robert Lincoln O'Brien, of Brookline, was elected a Resident Member of the Society.

The Vice-President announced the death of Edward Hooker Gilbert, a Resident Member, and spoke briefly of his life and of his connection with the Society.

Mr. CHARLES P. GREENOUGH read a translation of a

LETTER FROM ST. JEAN DE CREVECŒUR.¹

NEW YORK

6 JUNE 1788

MONSIEUR LE DUC

The more the settlements West of the Mountains increase, the more frequently earthen fortifications are discovered which excite the admiration of all travelers—they are generally built in a circular or elliptic form—all are located upon elevated ground and in the neighborhood of fountains or rivers and are provided

¹ The original is in Mr. Greenough's collection.

with a Mondrain (sand mound) or Cavalier (parapet) of a conical shape and of a size proportioned to the length of the fortification. These fortifications are to-day covered with trees of the same species as those in the neighboring forests.

I cannot believe that the people who have built these various fortifications and who therefore must have been numerous, industrious and warlike did not understand the use of iron and yet up to the present moment no traces thereof have been found.

Several tumuli or barrows have just been discovered in the County of Bourbon (in the country of Kentukey) of a lower height; after being cut crosswise they were found to be composed of six beds for the dead, enclosed between four flat stones and covered at the end by a mass of pebbles — the bones were in an excellent state of preservation.

I have lately received a detailed account of a discovery no less startling which I take the liberty of repeating to you and which was given to me by Monsieur Brown, delegate in Congress for the County of Kentukey. About the year 1778 several colonists from North Carolina crossed the mountains and after having passed through a great extent of country, they halted upon the River of Cumberland or of the Shawanous and having found there a large number of fields covered with Roseaux (cane brakes) they founded a city which has since been called Nash Ville about 201 miles from the junction of the River with the Ohio and very near a large stream well known to all hunters under the name of French Lick because a salt spring was found in the middle of the bed of the River. While searching for means to extract the salt they discovered upon the Northern bank of the same stream a sort of rampart about eight feet higher than the natural level of the neighboring land upon the entire length of which they noticed a very great number of objects to which they gave the name of furnaces — after having carefully removed the rubbish with which those least injured were filled. Here is what they saw. The center was composed of a round stone, two feet in diameter and six inches thick around which were fixed six other stones, elevated fifteen inches above the level of the ground and nearly as much below. The space contained between these last was covered with another stone connecting them which has an outward and quite considerable slope — the sketch enclosed gives the exact dimensions of these little monuments — and in following this ridge they discovered 171 more of them but being weary they did not pursue their researches any further and were satisfied to count more than 300 of them. At some distance in a Northerly direction

they discovered a Cavalier (parapet) twenty feet high, the summit of which covered nearly the sixth part of an acre and upon which one of these colonists has since built his house.

Several miles Easterly of Nash Ville a small mountain is visible on the top of which was found the ruins of a considerable village surrounded by a rampart of great length and near the bottom a great number of tombs—each of them is provided with two stones, one placed near the head and the other towards the feet—in opening them they discovered that each body was enclosed within three flat and well jointed stones.

The course of the Cumberland River is navigable during six months of the year as far as 80 miles above Nash Ville, as are all the transapalachien rivers—it has very high banks which however have not prevented floods from inundating several times certain parts of the country—from its mouth for sixty miles it is deep but from that point to the end of navigation it is only an alternation of little rapids and of gentle and tranquil currents.

Nash-Ville is today considered to be the Capitol of the new county of Cumberland separate from that of Franklin and of Kentukey. It consists of 800 families and it is already divided into two counties, namely Davison and Somner. Would you believe that it is the English of Detroit who provide them with merchandise. So easy and so comfortable are the communications provided by all these rivers.

This is the route followed by them—

From Detroit they are sent in canoes to the mouth of Lake Erie	6	Leagues
From there crossing the Lake to the mouth of Miamis River	12	"
They then travel up the Miamis River as far as a great Indian village of the same name	57	"
Then portage as far as one of the branches of the Wabash called by French la petite Riviere (the little River)	2½	"
The length of this river as far as the Muskingham Stream	18	"
They then descend this river as far as the Sa Lamy River	20	"
And the same as far as Oxeyatanon where fifteen French families live	40	"
The same as far as the village of Vermillon where there is located a settlement of the Pians- kachas	20	"

Same to the high lands	20	Leagues
Also to the Post of Vincennes a great Canadian settlement where you find 150 houses	40	"
Again as far as the junction of the Wabash with the Ohio	55	"
Then the Ohio as far as its junction with the Cumberland River	22	"
Finally they ascend this last named River as far as Nash Ville	67	"
On the other side	77½	"
		<hr/>
		379½ Leagues

About 200 miles above Nash Ville beyond the junction of the three branches which form the Cumberland River not far from the mouth of the River of Rock Castle, three hunters have recently discovered regular fortifications and in the neighborhood many tombs upon the tops of which were found Inscriptions but such was their ignorance that they could not read them. Next autumn more particular details are expected.

Not far from the Long Island in the Holston River (one of the principal branches of the Ténésee) 200 miles above the spot so well known under the name of Muscle Shoals and a quarter of a mile from the line which divides Virginia from North Carolina there was found in a tunnel of lime stone (Pierre Calcaire) the skeleton of a man who must have been of extraordinary size. Colonel Selby, upon whose estate it was found, has with the greatest care collected all parts of the skeleton. The lower bone of the jaw is so large that the Colonel without inconveniencing himself places it under his own jaw and the two tibias are 2½ inches longer than those of an ordinary man.

A Calumet weighing seven pounds was found under the head of the skeleton, which represented an eagle and is of a very hard black marble. You can see the hollow which was made to hold the tobacco, also the hole into which the pipe stem was placed. A second was also found under the feet of the skeleton but of less weight. Nobody travels in these countries without stopping at Colonel Selby's place to examine these objects.

Nearly all the salt springs found in the countries about which I have had the honor of speaking to you, give only in their natural state a very small quantity of salt; the Americans have invented a method of boring to a great depth by drills made of several pieces. As soon as this operation is completed, the waters of these

springs are suddenly charged with a great quantity of salt, — in carrying on this operation in a Salt Marsh or Lick situated on the Holston River, they discovered seven feet deep a bed or immense heap of great bones, like those known for more than 30 years on the Bigbone Creek descending the Ohio River and which are believed to be the remains of a Mammoth.

I hope that you will not disapprove my action in calling these details to your attention. I thought they might excite your curiosity and merit perhaps some moments of your interest.

I shall have the honor in my first letter to give you an account of the useful and interesting experiments which have been made here in coal tar upon the outside and inside of vessels. On the outside it prevents the worms (*de Metz*) from attacking the planking. On the inside it drives out the rats. When the paints which they use to paint an apartment, are mixed with the oil of this same coal tar, they become an infallible preservation against every sort of vermin.

The nails, the hinges of vessels, previously heated and then dipped into this new form of coal tar are no longer exposed to the ravages of rust. A cargo of this coal tar has just arrived from Scotland, which has been sold on the spot.

Permit me to recall myself to the Memory of Madam your mother, of Madame the Duchesse, of Monsieur and Madam de Leon and to offer to them proof of my gratitude and respect. Accept yourself I pray you the same sentiments which I shall preserve during my whole life.

If I had more marked ability I should have sent you details much more interesting upon the political condition of these Republics which at this very moment are meeting a crisis which will reunite them in stronger ties or divide them into two or three confederations. We shall know in a month which it will be. I have the honor of being very respectfully, Monsieur le Duc, your very humble and very obedient servant.

ST. JEAN DE CREVECŒUR

MONSIEUR LE DUC DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULD.

Dr. ALLEN read the following on

CAPTAIN HECTOR McNEILL, CONTINENTAL NAVY.

Last year Mr. Frederick W. Denton, of Cambridge, presented to the Society a letter-book of Captain Hector McNeill of the Continental Navy, which was reported at the

May meeting of 1920. Captain McNeill commanded the frigate *Boston* in 1777 and the letter-book covers the period of an eventful cruise made in that year. When McNeill turned the ship over to her next commander, Captain Tucker, early in 1778, he presumably left the book on board. In 1780, when Charleston, South Carolina, surrendered to the British, the *Boston*, being in the harbor at that time, also fell into their hands. The letter-book had probably been taken ashore before the surrender. It was found many years later among the papers of Mr. Denton's aunt, Mrs. W. S. Adams, of 28 Church Street, Charleston, a pre-revolutionary house, though not occupied at that early period by Mrs. Adams's family. Whether the book remained in this house for nearly a century after it left the *Boston* or whether it led a migratory existence is a matter of conjecture.

The contents of this letter-book comprise not quite a third of the material which has been collected for publication in the *Proceedings* of the Society. A still larger proportion of the whole is furnished by a collection of papers belonging to the Hon. Charles W. Gray, of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, who has kindly allowed us to take copies; these were heirlooms in the McNeill family, descending through his youngest daughter. Some of them were printed several years ago in the *New Hampshire Genealogical Record*.¹ The remaining papers come chiefly from the Massachusetts Archives and the Library of Congress, the latter mostly John Paul Jones manuscripts. The Chamberlain Collection in the Boston Public Library and the Bostonian Society each contributes one letter. To the officials of all these institutions we are indebted for very interesting and valuable material. A number of other items are reprinted from the *Proceedings* of this Society; also two letters from the *Publications of the Naval History Society* and two from the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*.

Among the papers in the Gray collection is an autobiographical sketch which throws much light on McNeill's antecedents and early life. Unfortunately it comes down only to the period of the French and Indian War. From this account it appears that he was of Scotch descent and was

¹ January, 1907.

born in County Antrim, Ireland, October 10, 1728. He came to Boston with his parents in his ninth year, arriving September 7, 1737. He was educated in the Boston schools and in later life followed the sea. November 12, 1750, he was married in the First Presbyterian Church to Mary Wilson.¹ Their first child, Robert, was born April 12, 1752, and died in September the following year. In November, 1753, came the birth of another son, Hector, and just two years later that of the eldest daughter, Mary. Another daughter, Lettice, was born at some time after the period covered by this sketch.

Entering the king's service in April, 1755, McNeill, then master of a vessel, carried General Monckton to Nova Scotia and apparently remained during the siege of Beauséjour. He returned to Boston in October, but about the end of the year 1775 was again in the Bay of Fundy. He was soon captured with his ship by Indians, near Passamaquoddy Bay. With this incident the sketch comes abruptly to an end. We have a bit of information, however, derived from Indian sources and recorded in a journal kept in 1764 by James Boyd, a settler on Passamaquoddy Bay. Boyd learned from the natives of that region that McNeill, after his capture, had been taken to St. Andrews and thence to Quebec.² He there disappears from recorded annals for more than nine years. He may have been held a prisoner until the end of the war, but at all events he resumed his seafaring life in course of time.

In a list of "Port Arrivals" it is noted that on April 19, 1765, "Hector McNeill, Sloop *Phenix* from Hallyfax," with a considerable number of passengers, arrived in Boston, and on November 24, 1766, he came from Quebec in the sloop *Fanny and Jeany*. Three other entries of his vessels from Quebec are reported: August 10, 1767, the sloop *Brittania*, August 25 and December 15, 1768, the sloop *Swallow*.³ This last arrival is mentioned in the *Dairy of John Rowe*.⁴

¹ *Boston Records*, xxviii. 341, where the date given is November 10.

² *2 Proceedings*, iii. 91. There is no record in the Massachusetts Archives of any service of Captain McNeill in the French and Indian War.

³ *Boston Records*, xxix. 264, 288, 295, 307, 311.

⁴ *2 Proceedings*, x. 71.

Captain McNeill's first wife died February 7, 1769, and lies in the Granary Burying Ground, where her stone may be seen.¹ On December 26, 1770, he married Mary Watt. By this union he had one child, a daughter named Sarah.²

At the outbreak of the Revolution McNeill was living in Quebec with his wife and daughters. They are mentioned several times between June and October, 1775, in the "Journal Kept in Quebec in 1775 by James Jeffrey," and under the date August 29, it is stated that "Hector McNeill arrived this evening from Dominica in Drummonds Scho^r. He says that at Canso he heard that at Roxbury had been another battle, and most of the light horse were killed in the engagement — but we must wait for particulars."³ At this time McNeill's son was a member of Captain Nicholson Broughton's company of Colonel John Glover's regiment in the American army before Boston; his name appears on two rolls of the company, dated June 27 and December 20, 1775.⁴ Two years later the younger McNeill was a seaman on his father's ship.

There are two letters dated "Camp before Quebec," April 25 and 26, 1776,⁵ the first from Colonel James Lockwood, the other from Major General David Wooster, both addressed "To Capⁿ Hector McNeill at Point au Tremble," giving orders which indicate that he was then engaged in operations on the St. Lawrence River, in the service of the United Colonies. McNeill must have returned to Boston not long after this, for he was appointed, June 15, 1776, a captain in the Continental Navy, and on October 10, when the relative rank of naval captains was established, he was placed third on the list.

Before this arrangement of rank Captain McNeill had

¹ MS. Records in Boston City Hall; Data received from Mr. Charles A. Coolidge.

² *Boston Records*, xxx. 349. McNeill's will mentions his son and three daughters, the youngest by his second wife. It was through this daughter, Sarah, that the Gray collection of McNeill papers descended to their present owner. On December 6, 1795, Sarah was married by Rev. Jeremy Belknap to Thomas Neil (*Boston Records*, xxx, 95). Their daughter Jane married Shadrach H. Sise.

³ *Hist. Coll. Essex Inst.*, I. 132.

⁴ Mass. Archives (Rolls), xxxv. 86, LVII, 13.

⁵ *N. E. Hist. and Gen. Reg.*, xxx. 333.

been selected for the command of the frigate *Boston*, of 24 guns, which had been built at Newburyport and was fitting out at Boston. Cruising orders for some of the new frigates built in New England were issued by the Marine Committee of the Continental Congress in the fall of 1776. The first, dated September 21, applied to the *Boston* and *Raleigh* alone. Later orders, of October 23, included the *Hancock* with these two, and their captains were given detailed instructions for a cruise which, it was expected, would soon take place.¹ But the ships were not ready for sea until the following year.

Among the Commodore Tucker Papers, in the Harvard College Library, is a photostat copy of Tucker's commission as "Captain of the armed ship called the *Boston*," dated March 15, 1777.² It may have been the purpose of the Marine Committee to supersede McNeill at this time, but if so, it was not carried out. Tucker took command of the ship a year later.

In 1777 the above mentioned instructions of the Marine Committee to McNeill and other captains were followed in a modified form and the long deferred expedition took place. The *Raleigh*, Captain Thompson, was still unready for sea, but the *Hancock* and *Boston*, during the spring and summer, made one of the memorable cruises of the war, beginning with hope and ending in disaster, as many of the Revolutionary Navy's undertakings did. The *Hancock* was commanded by Captain John Manley, senior in rank to McNeill. The General Court of Massachusetts, in resolves adopted April 24 and 26, 1777, urged these officers to put to sea at once, in pursuit of certain of the enemy's cruisers which were harassing the coast and waters of the state. Inducements, in the form of prize money and insurance, were offered to privateers to accompany the frigates. Nine private armed vessels accepted the terms.

The squadron finally sailed May 21. The privateers were of no use whatever; becoming separated, they soon dropped behind and took no further part in the enterprise. Private

¹ *Out-Letters of the Continental Marine Committee* (Publ. Naval Hist. Soc., Vol. IV), I, 14, 42.

² Tucker Papers, I, 18.

vessels were ill adapted for cruising in squadrons and during the Revolution failed in nearly all attempts at coöperation with regular ships or with each other. Early in the cruise the frigates fell in with a superior force, but escaped. In June they captured the British frigate *Fox*. In July they encountered three British ships, the *Rainbow*, *Flora*, and *Victor*, and the engagement which ensued resulted in the surrender to the enemy of the *Hancock* and *Fox*. The *Boston* escaped, took refuge in the Sheepscott River, and later returned to Boston Harbor.¹

In a cruise of this sort, hazardous at best, the utmost harmony and perfect understanding between the captains was essential to success. That the opposite was true on this occasion was notorious before they sailed; Manley and McNeill were at swords' points. Dr. Samuel Cooper wrote to John Adams, April 3, 1777: "Manly and McNeal do not agree. It is not, I believe, the Fault of the first . . . If they are not better united, infinite Damage may accrue."² In McNeill's letters will be found sharp criticism of his superior's conduct during this cruise. He also had trouble with the officers of his own ship. James Warren, a member of the Eastern Navy Board, in a letter to John Adams, September 7, 1777, in speaking of the frigate *Boston*, said: "And great misunderstanding between the Captain and his officers, who it is said will not again go to sea with him, and who say he never will again man his ship. Capt. McNeill's reputation on his first appointment was extremely good; it seems to be now reversed. The last cruise was at first very successful, but did not end so. There was certainly great blame somewhere. I won't pretend to say where. He lays it on Manley, as you may see by his letters to the Marine Committee; while his officers dont scruple to say that if he had followed Manley's orders we might have had not only the *Fox*, but the *Flora* and *Rainbow*." In a later letter (October 12), Warren speaks of McNeill's "overbearing haughtiness and unlimited conceit."³ Yet it would appear from

¹ In the papers here collected, Captain McNeill gives detailed accounts of all these operations. For British accounts, see Allen, *Naval History of the Revolution*, I. 205, 208-214.

² Adams MSS.

³ *Warren-Adams Letters*, Vol. LXXII, I, 366, 373. See *Out-Letters of the Marine Committee*, I. 164, 170.

some of the captain's letters that he was at heart devoted to the interests of his ship's company, both officers and men, and solicitous for their welfare, demanding recognition of their rights especially in the matter of pay and prize money. McNeill had a good friend in Captain John Paul Jones, who expressed sympathy in letters included in this collection.

No report of the cruise by Captain Manley has come to light and his side of the story remains unheard. Nevertheless, public opinion in general was with him, and McNeill was held responsible for the loss of the *Hancock*, in not having come to her rescue. That this sentiment was not unanimous, however, is shown in a letter, dated March 30, 1778, of William Wetmore, of Salem, to Timothy Pickering. In recommending Captain John Fisk for the command of a Continental frigate, he says: "I am confident he wd. not give her away like a Coward as perhaps has been the case with some others, nor lose her like a blockhead as M ——— did his."¹

The frigate *Boston* remained in port until February, 1778, when she sailed for France under the command of Captain Samuel Tucker. In the spring of 1778 Captain Manley, who had been many months a prisoner, was released by exchange and returned to Boston. A Court of Inquiry was held, no report of which exists, but it is alluded to in a letter of James Warren and John Deshon, of the Eastern Navy Board, to William Vernon, the third member. Under date of Boston, June 10, they speak of Manley's Court Martial, then taking place, and add: "Capt. McNeill's comes on Friday next. He conducts in the present Similar to what he did in the former Court of Enquiry, which is to Create as much Charge and perplexity as possible."² The verdict of acquittal in Manley's case, signed by Dudley Saltonstall, President, and dated June 13, 1778, is printed in the *Publications of the Rhode Island Historical Society*.³ A letter of June 16, from John Deshon to Joshua Huntington, after mentioning Manley's acquittal, says that "McNeill is on

¹ Pickering MSS. (Mass. Hist. Soc.), xvii. 128. Doubtless Manley is meant.

² *Publ. R. I. Hist. Soc.*, viii. 246.

³ *Ib.*, viii. 247.

Tryal. I fancy he will not come of so well.”¹ No report of McNeill’s trial has been preserved, but a sentence either of suspension or dismissal was imposed. On June 30 he made a protest which has also apparently been lost, but is referred to in a petition to the Continental Congress, dated Philadelphia, July 25, in which he expresses himself as being “exceedingly Agrieved.” This petition was referred to the Marine Committee, which recommended, January 15, 1779, “That the Sentence of the Court Martial against Capt. McNeill be not caried into execution.” Consideration of this report was postponed and this seems to have ended the matter. McNeill never again served in the Continental Navy.²

Little is known of Captain McNeill’s subsequent career. Soon after his trial he went to Philadelphia, apparently with a view to conduct more effectively his attempts at reinstatement in the naval service. There he seems to have remained many months, perhaps until the spring of 1779. Later he was engaged to some extent in privateering. On October 26, 1779, he signed as witness the bond of the brigantine *Charming Peggy*.³ His name appears on a petition, dated May 22, 1780, praying to be commissioned commander of the privateer *Pallas*.⁴ This vessel sailed for Europe, bound to Amsterdam. A business letter of August 22, 1780, from that place, says: “We are sorry to mention you that to this day the Brigantine *Pallas*, Hector McNeill, is not yet arrived, so that in all appearances said Vessel is fallen into wrong hands.”⁵ The fate on the *Pallas* is here left in doubt. Another petition, dated November 21, 1780, pertains to the ship *Adventure*, which also had a Continental commission. In this case McNeill’s signature is not in his own handwriting. These were all Massachusetts privateers. On May 10, 1782, McNeill witnessed the bonds of two Virginia privateers with Continental commissions.⁶ He may have been on a

¹ Wolcott MSS. (Mass. Hist. Soc.).

² Papers of Contin. Congress, XLII. 5, 73, XXXVII, 163. See *Out-Letters of the Marine Committee*, I. 243, 252, 271, 280.

³ Mass. Archives, v, 163.

⁴ *Ibid.*, VI. 266, CLXXI. 164.

⁵ *Commerce of Rhode Island*, II, 104, 163.

⁶ Mass. Archives, CLXXI. 307; *Naval Records of Amer. Rev.* (Calendar). 221, 406, 494.

Southern trip at this time, but that he was living in Boston in 1782 is shown by letters written to him by Paul Jones.

The only further knowledge we have of the subject of this sketch concerns his end, which was befitting a sailor. In answer to inquiry Mr. Gray of Portsmouth writes: "Capt. Hector McNeill was lost at sea on Christmas night, 1785." A considerable correspondence in later years between his widow and General Knox gives the impression that the captain left his family in far from affluent circumstances.¹

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH ²

Brigantien *Minerva* July 13th, 1773.

I, Hector McNeill, being now at sea and (blessed be god) finding my mind composed, and sound, do now in His name (and I trust for his Glory) begin a work, which I have long had in mind to accomplish which is to Leave to my children, and Freinds, that may survive me, some account of my Predecessors, and kindred, and of mine own Life, and Perigrinations, throu this troublesome World. That they may know hereafter, from what quarter of the Earth, and from what Stock of People they are descended. That they may thereby be Excited to Excel in allworthyness of life, and conversation rather than debase the blood of their Ancestors, by a degenerate and wicked Life. — and that they may be Taught by the Goodness of God Manifested, Particularly to me, in many verey Pressing dangers, to have theire trust in him, and in him Only; who has offten saved me, where even hope, reather might take the name of Presumption, and when no vizible door was left for my Escape. For all which may I while I live; and may my children when they read this, have a due Sense of his mercy's, and of theire dependance on him, impressed on their minds, for ever, from one Generation to another.

I cannot help Lamenting that my Father (who had it much in his power, because blessed with an uncommon Memory, and a good understanding; as well as a very Particular knowledge of his Clan and Kindred,) did not leave me some such help, as I intend (throu god's goodness) this which I am now writeing shall be to my children,) for I hold it a great blessing, to be well assured of being descended from a Stock of People who have been distinguished for ages, for Vertue reather than riches, Therefore

¹ Knox MSS. (Mass. Hist. Soc.).

² From the Gray Papers.

am willing that mine should know from whence they came, which few in this country do. Our removal from our native country, to a strange land in the ninth year of my life, (where since my Fathers death I have not been able to get much information) my memory is all I have to trust to. Yet shall I Endeavor to relate my Story strictly consistant with truth, wishing that what I commit to these Sheets, may be believed, and received, with all that integrity of Soul with which I write them. fully determined that my account of things shall be true be it ever so Lame and imperfect in other respects.

First, the People from whom I am descended, by the father's side of the house, (of the name Macniel) were natives of Kintyer in the West highlands of Scotland, from which country my Grandfather (Neal Macneil) followed the fortunes, of the infortunate family of Stuart. This at last led him abroad where he spent his youth and some of his Blood in Foreign Service, so that after his return, he was allways call'd to the day of his death, Neal nafrankah, (or Neal the frenchman). He at last returned and married a wife (of the Name of O Neil) in the north of Ireland, within 5 miles of Bellycastle in the county of Antrim, who lived with him 55 years, and then died, leaving him a numerous family of children, chiefly sons, some of whom I remember to have seen, Namely, Charles, He[nry], John, and Malcolm, which last was mine own Father, [who] was the youngest child of his fathers family.

Secondly the People from whom I am descended by the mothers Side, are also from the West of Scotland, of the Name of Stuart, deriveing theire Pedegree from that Ancient, and illustrious, family, of Stuarts, which has cost so much blood and Treasure to keep theire Simple Sons in Possession of theire fathers inheriteance.

My Mother, whose name was Mary Stuart, was verely Proud of her ancestors, and loved her name to folly; and tho she never reaped any great good from her attachement to them, yet it cost her many a Painfull and sorrowfull hour, to my certain knowledge.

She was a Pious, devout woman, and I verely believe a true Christian, the hapy fruits of which I trust she now reaps in Glory. She was the fondest mother that ever had a son, and of all her sons none so loved as me who was her fa[vorite]. I do remember to have heard my father, and mother, both say; they were married that verely week in which King George the Second came to the crown, (I mean the time of his accession).

I was born on thursday Octr. 10th, 1728, and christened the Sabath following in Bellentoy church by the reverend Doctor Stuart, who was a distant relation of my mothers.

The Place of my birth was at a little Village near the Sea Side not far from the giants Casuaye, call'd (dounesevrick) Dounsevricks and in the Parish of Bellentoy aforesaid, the County of Antrim, 10 miles from Collrane, 8 miles from Bellemony, 5 miles from Bellycastle, and 3 from Bushmills.

In July 1737, my father with his whole family consisting of six souls, viz. himself, my mother, my self, my Sister Jean, my Sister Margret, and Sister Mary, (then only six months old) Embark'd on board the *Sygemanh*, Daniel Gibbs commander at Port[rush], and on the Seventh of September following arrived at boston, haveing lost my second Sister (Margret) on the Passage. This was but a Prelude to our succeeding troubles, for before we had been three months in the country among a Set of Strangers, who were not verely Sympathetick, my other two Sisters also died. These repeated Strokes of Providence was most sensibly felt by my dear Parents, who now too late begann to repent their removing to a land of Strangers, where none seem'd touched with their heartfelt misfortunes, their anguish was the greater, as they had to blame their removall from home for the loss of their children; who haveing taken the Meazles on board the Ship, and being Verely much wet with the Seawater in a Storm (in which the Ship lost her masts,) they took cold, and never after recover'd, but died as above recited.

Here I cannot Pass Remarking, a Singular instance of the Providence of God Manifested, in our Preservation in this Storm which overtook us in our Passage to America.

The Ship in which we pass'd, was about 240 Tons burthen, the Captain, (whose name was Daniel Gibbs) had for his own emolument letten his cabin, and State-rooms, to Passingers and had built for himself a convenient round-house on the after Part the Ships quarter-deck. He had Also built two Smaller ones, one on each side the companion, cappable of containing five Passingers each.

My father, on Viewing the Ship, took a Particular fancy to have one of those little Lodging Places for his family, thinking it better to be where we might allways enjoy the benefit of fresh Air, and be also, intirely detached from the nauseous stench, and filth, of a crowd of Passingers, (which all who Lay below were constantly exposed to,) the Ship being verely much crowded (for at our departure from Port[rush] in Ireland, we reckoned near 470 Souls on board). He Accordingly Agreed with the captain for that birth on the Larboard side the Companion, for which he Paid him three pounds five Shillings per Passinger, those who lay below only Paying three pounds.

It so happened that when the Ship broach'd too in the Storm, her Ballast, Water, Passengers, and Everything below shifted, and kept her down on her beam-ends, until the water run in abundantly at all her hatch-ways. In this Distress our birth being to Leeward; 'twas with great difficulty my dear Parents, could save their helpless infants from drowning, but holding them up as high as the top of our wretched cabin would Permit. In this horrid Situation we remained some time until the masts went away of themselves. Then the Ship righted a little, so as to free our birth of the water; Except now and then an Extraordinary high Surge of the Sea overwhelmed us. The Goodness of God in Preserving us at this time was very Extraordinary, when the little defence we had to resist the Violence of the Waves, was none other than a poor Cabin made on the Ships deck, with half inch deal boards and but slightly secured to the Ships Companion. My dear father, (who had by nature a good Mechanical genius,) had Examined (but a day or two before the storm) the manner in which the birth was secur'd, and Observed that it did not appear solid Enough to resist bad weather, on which he apply'd to the Ships Carpenter, who gave him some nails, and a few Staves of an old Beef Barrel; with these he fastened the Birth to the Companion [with] his own hands, not caring to trust to a Person who seemed very indifferant about that and also the Ship.

We soon had reason to thank the Almighty, for having Suggested to my father such a thought — for to this Precaution (under the direction of Providence) was owing our Preservation in the succeeding Storm, for in the condition the Ship then lay, our birth was Suspended Sideways in such a manner, that, 'twas marvelous indeed, that our weight, and the weight of water in it, had not forced it bodily off from the companion, into the sea. In which case the poor little family, must have gone all together, and in one moment, finished a trip which most of them had but just begun; but that good God who had more mercys in Store for us, Preserved us in this great Extremity. The Scene of this disaster, was in the night, which made it appear more dreadful and Allarming, the Sea itself, Seem'd to be a body of fire rather than water, the cracking, and bursting of the Sails, and Masts, was like thunder; the Ship Lying down on her beam-ends, her Ballast, and Passengers Shifted to Leeward, her masts and tiller broken, the Sea making a free Passage over her, the Shrieks, and Crys, of helpless Mothers and infants, whose Eyes were now in vain turn'd towards their husbands or fathers for safety, in short the whole Exhibited such a Scene of distress, and look'd

so like enevitable death that the stoutest heart failed, even the hardy tars (who are commonly wont to despise dangers) gave all up for lost, so that of fourteen Stout Seamen, besides Officers, belonging to our Ship, only Six men Stood the deck in this Extremity. All the others haveing Slip'd away into holes and Corners, reather than meet death openly; when thus awfully armed against them.

Those men who stood the deck and bravely did their duty, ought to be remembered with gratitude, I will therefore transmit their names to Posterity, as far as in my Power. Daniel Gibbs the Captain, Mr. . . . Demmick, chief mate, Mr. . . . Smith second mate, George Fitzgerrald, Boatswain, John McKown, Seaman, John Dunn, a Seaman who wrought his Passage.

The names of the others I have mostly forgot (as I would have all Posterity forget them). There was one Josiah Cox of casco-bay among them. I saw him a few years afterwards master of a ship; he was a fair outside of a man, but not very Valiant. His name was Tom Adams, who had the helm and suffered the Ship to Broach too at first. He was also a fine, fair-weather Sailor.

When day light appeared, and brought to our view the deplorable State in which we were, the stoutest heart trembled. When we considered our numbers on board, our Ship a Wreck, the great distance we were from land (then near 300 Leagues), the impossibility of approaching it without masts, and sails, (of both which we were almost destitute) the small quantity of water now on board (which by the by was and had been the whole Voyage very bad) I say when all these deficiualtys were considered; 'twas then we began Sincerely to repent our haveing quited our native shore. Better had it been to have still tarried there, and to have struggled on with Oppression, and Tyranny for the term of our natural lives, then to thus Perish in the Ocean without any eye to Pity us. Various were the complaints, and Pityable the case of such a Multitude. Nothing but the recent memory of their late deliverance, and a firm confidence in that Mercy full God who had saved them in their great distress, could compose their Spirits, on this Occasion.

When our first Surprize and Perturbation of mind was over; we next began to think what means was yet in our Power for our own Preservation. The Seamen began to contrive Jury-masts. The Passengers Produced all their winnow Cloths, and coarse Sheets. With these and the remainder of the Ships Sails, were such new ones made, as put her once more in a condition to Pro-

ceede (tho slowly) towards our Port, so that the first Part of our Passage haveing been fortunate, the latter creeping part of it; lengthened out the whole to Eight Weeks and three days, from our leaveing Portrush in Ireland, to our Arival at Boston in New England. Here we met with a verey indifferent reception from the People of the country, who seem'd to have a contempt for Strangers, of what denomination soever; more Especially those who came from Ireland (whom they took for granted were all Roman catholicks). Add to this our haveing the Meazles on board the Ship of which distemper twenty seven Persons had died on the Passage, so that we were not suffered to Land, but Order'd down to Spectical Island, there to Perform a quarentine.

While we lay there, a relation of my mothers, whose name was Nancy Stuart (now married to one of the name of Boyd) who had been some two or three years in the country came to see us, and haveing brought a Permitt from the Selectmen of the town, brought us on shore, and conducted us to her house in long-Lane.

On our Landing at Hubbards Wharf, my Father was accosted by that churlish old man himself. He ask'd in an angry tone, from whence we came; who sent for us; why we came there; and why we did not stay in our own country. To all theese questions, my father answered him in few words, telling him with some heat and firmness, that 'twas not him who sent for us, nor were we accountable to him in any respect whatever. The Vile wretch snarled as he went and shut his window, growling out something about takeing the Bread out of childrens mouths, etca., etca. This verey uncouth Salutation from the first man we met at Landing, lookd verey discouraging and wrought so deeply on my fathers spirrits, that he did not recover himself for some moments. At length the Tears running freely over his manly cheeks, gave Way to that Passion he could no otherwise vent, and he became calm before we reached the house of our Benefactors.

A Little Lad who lived next door Observeing me a Stranger, fell into conversation with me, and being highly diverted with my manner of Pronounceation, (whither to amuse himself or some of his comrades to whom he intended to introduce me) led me out into the streets where we soon met with other Boys who were going to see a Ship Launched. Thither I accompany'd them where were gathered together great numbers of Spectators among others many small boys, some of whom began to make remarks on my dress and appearance. At length one more Audacious then the Others, singled himself out, and endeavour'd to Provoke me by his Scurrilous Language, which I for some time bore with christian

Patience, (considering my self a Stranger, and having taken great notice of the reception my father had but just received from Old Hubbard I expected but little favour from those who were now round me). At length this unmannerly boy most unhappily for himself, call'd me Irish. The word was scarcely out of his mouth, before he had my little fist—dab—in his Eyes. A Battle ensued and he was beaten most unmercifully; for tho I had but just come on shore from a fateaguing half starved Passage, the Agitation of Spirrits into which I had been thrown by that days Adventures supply'd my want of Strengt^h and Experience too. For I had never been bred to a fighting or quarelsome life. I returned to our Lodgings highly Extol'd by the Spectators for my courage and dexterity, little thinking of the train of Mischiefs and hardships, which began to follow me from that moment forward. For dureing the whole time of my Boy-hood in the town of Boston my life was one continued State of warfare. Scarcely ever did the day Pass, but one, two, or more Battles, was my sure lot. As the country boys were verely apt to cast reflections on me or my country, so never did I let them Pass unpunished. Even those who were much too old, and too Strong for me, I never Permitted to insult me with impunity. Untill at last I became such an Adept at Boxing, that they became civil and Complisante to me for theire own sakes. This was Perfectly Agreeable to me, for my Nature abhorr'd quarleing and contention all my days, but I was drove into that kind of Life, by the incivility and barbarous Partiality; of these People, among whom I was obliged to spend my time.

On my first appearance at a Publick School, where we were upwards of two hundred boys, (our Masters name was Allen,) I happened to be the only Stranger (for not being country born in those days made one an Alien to all intents,) here to theire everlasting Shame, I was cruelly treated. For they Seldome contented themselves with threshing me one at a time, but would frequently shew me foul-play, and get at me two or more at once, untill they had master'd me for that time. This I allways revenged singly whenever an Oppertunity offer'd, untill at last, being brought by custom, to suffer a great deal of Bruseing and in my turn to Pay as well, they let me alone in peace. Here I would not be understood to glory in having been the cock of the school. Nor would I have any body think, that I approve of a quarelsome fighting life, in Either Boys or Men; but I reather mention theese things (tho meer childish triffls) to Shew Posterity how hard the fate of Strangers was in those days in New England; and of all

Strangers none so disliked as those whom they called Irish, of whom they thought as the Jews of Old, with respect to the Galileans (can any good thing come out of Ireland). But blessed be god the times are much alter'd; the People of New England, have now a better Oppinion of us; they haveing found by Experience, that the Protestant Settlers from the North of Ireland, are the most invaluable Set of People theire New country can boast of, they being in generall industrious, Sober, honest, people; and Vailant in theire Wars with the french and Indians, from which incumbrance this country has not been long Exempted. This more than can be said of the People of any Other country whatever who have yet come among the New-Englanders.

Since the late greveious Administration of Lord Hillsbourough commenced, I have often thought within my self, how strange a thing it seem'd to be, that a whole country should (in the course of Providence) be Oppressed, and Persecuted; by a Single Person of that nation; of whom (formerly) they themselves made a Merrit of Persecuting an individual. I would not overstretch this idea, but I think a good Lesson may be learned from it. Shall however Pass it at this time to follow more Particularly my intended Story.

We had not been ashore more than ten days before my youngest Sister Mary, died; and in about six weeks afterwards, my Eldest sister Jean, followed. The sorrow of my afflicted Parents was inexpressible, who now saw themselves in a strange country, strip'd of theire Relations, Acquaintance and children (except my self), and that in little more than 3 months time. Thus they spent the first winter in mourning and Sorrow, resolving to return home again the next Succeeding Sumer. But Providence Order'd it Otherwise; and with the new year New Scenes opened more Agreeable then we Expected, so that from thenceforth my Parents became in a good measure reconciled to theire fate, and Endavoured to make the best of it in New England; in decem[be]r, 1738, my sister Elizabeth was born, and in Jan[uar]y, 1740, my Brother William; in Feb[ruar]y, 1742, another Sister Jean; and in May, 1744, my Brother Isaac; in June, 1746, my Brother Jacob, and in Sept[embe]r, 1748, another Sister Mary, which last did not live above a month.

I had from my Infancy allways discover'd an inclination for a Sea Life, which my Parents discouraged by Every means in theire Power, which I do now think (and Long have thought) Proceeded from theire fondness for me. The Arguments made use of, and the Love and respect I allways had for my Parents, proved hither-

too sufficient to deter me from it. Happy for me had it still been so. Yet being now grown a little too headstrong, and longing to be from under that restraint, my Parents had a right to exercise over me I did (and sorry am I now to say it) I did Break Away from my indulgent Loveing Parents, and much against theire inclination, go to sea. I verily do believe that in all my life, I never did any thing which cost my Parents one Moment's Sorrow, except this one thing of going to sea. For which act of disobedience the Almighty has in the course of his Providence Punished me severely.

I was now in the 17th year of my age, well grown and verey active; add to this a strong Propensity for that kind of Employment, by which (for the future) I did intend to get my Bread. I soon became much Esteemd by all I saild with, and met with great Encouragement. So that in June, 1750, I was made master of a Vessell in a Verey Snug trade, and constant Employ.

Several years before this Period I had contracted an inclination for Mary Wilson, daughter to deacon Robert Wilson of Boston. I can truely say when it first began with me, I knew not what it meant. Riper years at last Suggested to me what was my complaint, but I remained so verey Bashfull, that 'twas not without great deficulty I disclosed my mind to her. I found her also so overcome with Shamefacedness that I could Easily see her mind and inclinations was but a counter part of mine own. I do acknowledge my self much indebted to the care of heaven, and have great reason to bless my god for ever, for haveing in the course of things, directed mine eyes, my heart, and every affection to that aimable and worthy Object; for whose sake alone I gave up every thought of all others; and found my self Extremely happy, Expecting in due time to Possess her who was the mistress of my desires. This helped to Ballance my unwary youth, and Proved too much for every other Temptation; so that instead of being toss'd about by a desire of change, and Exposed to diseases and Pains, together with a remorse of conscience the sure Pur-sveiant of early Vice, I was Enabled by the Preserving goodness of God, to bring my self to her chaste arms, Pure, and undefiled, from all crimes, and theire consequences; which are but too often the silent, selfaccuseing, bedfellows of many a new married man.

On the 12th of November, 1750, I was married to this lovely woman, myself being then just turned of twenty tow, and she within two months of twenty years of age. I was married on Monday Evening, and sail'd for Annapolis Royal on Thursday morning following; leaveing all freinds in Perfect health. Which blessing

did not continue long amongst us, for on the succeeding Sabbath I arrived at Annapolis so bad of a Pluresie fever, that no life was Expected for me; and remaind dangerously ill so long that my Vessell was sent home again before the dead of Winter shou'd set in, not Looking for my recovery.

While I lay in this fever, given over by Physicians as well as all others who saw me, I had something Verey uncommon Communicated to me, whither in a dream, or by means of some Supernatural Agent, I cannot say; nor is it in my Power to this day to account for it; 'twas no less then the awfull, and lively, representation of the Great day of the Lord; which I am Persuaded will surely come and in a manner not far different from what I then saw and shall one day Experience. May God of his infinite Mercy prepare my Soul for the dreadfull, Pleaseing, moment.

Methought, some one came to my bedside and asked me if I knew my mother was dieing. I answer'd no, and seem'd much alarm'd. I then fancy'd I heard the children crying and could Verey plainly distinguish their different Voices. Soon after which my mother appear'd at my bedside, and ask'd me if I knew that she was dead. I answer'd no, and told her I hoped 'twas not so. She said 'twas really so, and that she was then instantly going to appear before the Judgement seat of Christ. Every thing appear'd so plain and my mothers answers so naturealle, that I begann to be in doubt whither I my self was in the Body or not, to be assured of which, I asked my mother whither I was dead or not. She told me that I was not yet dead. I then asked her where my father was. She said she had left him in great trouble and Perplexity, and to my surprize seem'd very indifferent about him or her children, as if her whole Attention were fixed on the trial just before her. She desired me to stretch my sight around me and take the last View of all Nature, for that now time was going to end and Eternity commence. I look'd and beheld a Vast shining body of light coming towards us, and was told by her that what I then saw was God in Majesty comeing to Judge the world, I plainly saw all nature bend before this dread appearance, the hills and mountains moulderig away, like heaps of dry sand; sinking down to rise again no more.

I then began to be fearfull about my self and would have gladly been found among the righteous. I asked my mother what she apprehended would be her fate. She smiled and said, my child, you shall see me Presently seated on the right hand of my Judge and Saviour who laid down his life for my salvation. I then asked her what would become of me and my father. She said it

would go verely hard with us. I then cryd out, O my mother, will there be no favour shewn to the Seed of the righteous. She said none, but that every one must stand or fall by themselves. I then saw the earth opening, the dead riseing, and Millions of People, small and great hastening towards this awfull throne which had the Appearance of an immense Large Temple of fire, within which were Multitudes of Voices singing Praises to their Almighty King. I asked my mother what the different crowd of People meant, who seemd to huddle together in bands. She answered, that these were the different classes, and different Persuasions, among mankind, who were to be Judged each class by themselves. All those people seemd Exceeding earnestly Employ'd in preparing themselves for an Examination before this awfull throne of light. Among the different crowds, I observed one Particular Set, who seem'd to have bundles with each of them; on the opening of which bundles, Vast numbers of little Packages were seen which by their appearance put me in mind of those little round things found in the fields, which the Shepherds call Blindman Balls. No sooner were theese produc'd but they burst. and vanished, like smoak; leaving a very disagreeable smell, and almost blinding all those who were near the place. I asked my mother what those things meant. She said theese were the Pardons for Sins and Absolutions Obtained by Papists and others from Priests, in which those poor deluded People had trusted, depending on them for their Justification, but now found when too late to be of no service to them.

The first that I observed was call'd to give an Account of themselves was the Ministers of the Gospel. These were commanded to Produce Lists of their communicants. I then saw, the foundations of the churches turned over like a heaps of ruins, from under which was brought forth books in which was written the names of all who had been members of theese churches since the begining. The writeing appear'd plain Except in Some Places where it lookd mouldy as if it had been wet, and dry'd again,. I look'd long to see if I knew any of those Ministers. At length I saw Doctor Sewall with a goodly List of Communicants in his hand going toward the Throne.

Theese with many other circumstances I saw, and have to this day as Plain in my memory as if it had been yesterday. Whither to call this a dream, or Vision, or the Phrinzeys of a distemper'd brain, I know not; but this I am certain of: that in the self same hour (which this Happened to me at Annapolis, as was remarked by Everybody round me in the house where I lay) my dear mother,

departed this Life at Boston, of a verely slight illness indeed of which she had complained but a few days. For I had left her in Perfect health the 15th, and she died the 27th of that same November, 1750, in the 40th year of her age. It pleased god to recover me from this dangerous Sickness and to return me safe home again about the middle of february, where I found my disconsolate Father surounded with a family of helpless infants, Mourning the loss of the much-loved Partner of his Life. I was Prepared for this event by the warning I had of it before, on which I depended from the verely moment 'twas communicated to me, as much as if I had been in my fathers house, and had seen what happened. It was nevertheless some comfort to me at my return to find my dear Mary in Perfect health. I then pitt'y'd my afflicted father, of whose irepairable loss I began to have some faint idea of by comparing my own Mercy's with his bereavements. His Griefe was unbounded, and his mourning without ceaceing, in-somuch that I verelyly believe 'twas the means of shortning his days. He had not only burried my mother in my Absence, but had himself undergone an operation by the chiugions hands for a cancer in his Lip, so that he was worn to a Skeliton with Sorrow of heart and pain of Body. This Weight alars Proved too much for him and made him totter on towards the Grave with rapid Progress. For notwithstanding some hopes of a cure after his Lip was cut off, yet the roots of the disease lying too deep for the incision Knife, it rekindled again with double force and carried him out of this troublesome world in October following, in the 47th year of his age, so that he did not live quite Eleven months after my mother.

I happened to be at home a few days before his death, time Enough to receive his last Commands which was a great comfort to me, as it was also the only thing my dear father desired most on Earth; that he might only be spared to take me by the hand, give me his Blessing, and deliver over to my care his helpless infants. Oh heart of Adament canst thou hold together when thou recollectet the tender Scene—a dieing father committing to thy care five helpless orphans, who must henceforth look up to thee, and call thee father, Mother, and Brother too. He said my dear child I have (notwithstanding my suffering the most Excruciating pain) desired of the Lord that he would spare me untill your return, that I might take my last farewell of you in this world, trusting in the Almighty to meet you again in glory. My worldly matters I have settled as you will find in that paper, which if you approve of 'tis well; if not, I will make Any Alteration in it

you think proper. I leave you no riches, my Blessing Excepted which I trust in the Lord will fall on you for good; but I leave you a great deal of care. I leave you at the head of this poor little flock, trusting that by the blessing of the Almighty and your honest improvement of your own abilities you will be Enabled to bring them up to the age of Ma[nhood] without their falling a Prey, or being Exposed to an ingrateful world; and may they prove loveing dutyfull children to you who is henceforth to be their Only Parent on Earth. The little I leave among you will wear well and I am Confident no one will ever do you an injury for my sake. May god be with you, and unite you in one band of love, and may his Blessing rest on you for ever.

After this he continued but a few days and gave himself no other trouble concerning us while he did remain Except to restrain our grieve for his sake. After the funerall was over I gave up the house in which I had Lived heretofore and removed into that which was my fathers. Here I found myself (tho young and just beginning the world) surrounded with a family of children whose whole dependence was (under Providence) fix'd on me alone. On this Occasion I could not help remarking to my wife how suddenly she had become a mother of so many children and asked her what she thought of the task. She said that inasmuch as God in his Providence had cast so great a care upon her, she hoped he would Enable her to do her duty towards them with a good conscience, and so far was she from repining at the thoughts of supporting such a burthen, that she undertook it with cheerfulness. This Obliging repply indear'd her to me more if Possible then before, and the unwearied pain she took from that time to her dieing day for those poor children may possibly be Equall'd, but never outdone by the fondest mother on earth; this remains as a lasting proof how conscientiously she acquitted herself of so great a charge.

On 12th April, 1752, our family was increased by the birth of our first child (a boy) who was christened Robert for his Grandfather, Mr. Wilson. He, with his mother, and all my brothers and sisters (Except my Brother William) had the small Pox together before he was two months old. They all did well notwithstanding they took it in the naturall way, as at that time inoculation was not verely generally approved of.

My Brother William not being then in Boston but at school in the Country (whither I had been oblig'd to send him on account of his Truant playing in town) was the Cause why he Escaped the small pox at that time. For I could not think of calling him out of the country 50 miles to town to punish him with sickness the

Event of which I dreaded. He had also a weakness in his left Eye some time before which added to my fears in case of his having that distemper which is so often fatal to weak Eyes. In all this I thought I was right and did for the best. But alas, how blind are we to the future. So it happened with me in this case. He was afterwards Exposed to have the small pox on board a Ship where he could have few or none of the Necessaries or conveniences of life about him and was thereby the innocent means of his own and my imprisonment severall months, as will be found in the Sequell.

In August, 1753, my Wifes Brother William Wilson died, and in September following my fine Boy, while I was absent. At my return I was told of my Loss a Little abruptly as I Landed on Long wharf by Sam. Sloane. Here for the first time I was sensible of the feelings of a Parent.

I had been Accustomed to deaths and had now worn mourning for three years together, but never did any death make such an impression on me before as I found the death of this child made. May God forgive the weakness of my Nature and give me allways a due resignation to his will.

In November, 1753, our second son was born and christened after me (Hector).

In March, 1754, my Wife's mother Mrs. Wilson died much Lamented. She was a good friend, Neighbour, and I hope and believe a Good Christian.

In April, 1755, I was taken into the King's Service and did carry Generall Monckton on the Expedition against Beausejour in the Bay of Funday (now Fort Cumberland), from which place [I] did not return untill October following.

In November, 1755, our first daughter Mary was born, and on the 24th december following I sailed for Annapolis Royal taking with me my Brother William merely to keep him from Beating the Streets and playing Truant, to which he had allways been addicted, and not in the least intending him for a Sea Life. However the Lord, who disposes of all things as he thinks best had now set before him and me a long chain of Suffering.

After being tossed at sea some days and running from one harbour to another along the Coast for Shelter, we did on the 29th of december aforesaid put into Harbour — Letonge [Etang] a little to the Eastward of Passcadamaquady.

Being at an Anchor I ordered the boat out and went on shore myself with Capt. Wm. Martin of the Royal Artillery, then a Passenger on board, and 4 men. I set the men to cut wood and

to search for water (which last they found not by reason of the severe frosts which had been for some days before). Capt. Martin and my self strol'd about in hopes of shooting sea-foull, and after being wearey of that I took the boat and went round the harbour to sound it. As I had never been in it but once before I thought it my duty to be Acquainted with it. In this Manner did we spend the first day in the harbour aforesaid, without finding the least Vestige of any humane creature Except ourselves. The second day was Verey stormy, so that we cou'd not well go on shore untill towards Evening. Then thinking it more adviseable to move our Birth so as to be able to sail before day light, which we could not well do from the Place we then lay in, at sunset therefore we hove up our Anchours and turnd up to the N Wt. side of the Harbour, then anchour'd again to waite a Convenient Oppertunity for quitting that place. At bed-time we set a watch of one hand which was the common Practice in all places where we were not afraid of Indians. As we had seen nothing of indians those two days past, thought ourselves quite secure.

I order'd the watch to give me a call at 4 o Clock next morning, and was accordingly called by Charles Conner, one of the Sailors. There was at that time a thick fogg or Vapour on the water so that we could not see the land. Consequently could not see our way out of the Harbour. I then order'd Henry Linkletter (the present watchman) to call me at day-light or before if the wind bree's'd and cleard away the fogg, then went to bed again and after some time fell asleep. The watchman had walk'd the deck untill he Judged me asleep and then came down to the fire in the Steerage, call'd up Capt. Martins Servant (one Chandler) with whom he began to play at Cequers or somewhat like it. In this stupid careless way he spent his time untill at last hearing something move over his head and being ask'd by Chandler what Noise that was on deck, he Attempted to go up to see, but to his great Surprize was stop'd by two indians at the door of the Companion with each a Musquet presented at him. He suddenly Jump'd backward and call'd out, the Indians at the same time givinge the usuall yells by which awfull noise I was awaked in great Surprize.

I instantly took off my capp and threw it at the candle to prevent being blinded thereby going out in the dark. I then took my Gun (which I had ashore shooting) and running as fast as possible to get on deck, was seized by Linkletter and Chandler who saw the danger I was running into. They hauled me back again, so that I fell with my face and Breast upon the Ladder. I

soon saw the narrow Escape I had met with. For scarcely was I fallen when one of their Hatchets which miss'd me as I fell stuck into the Ladder Just by my head. Had this blow reach'd me 'twould in all Probability have ended my days; but the great Preserver of man, who has his own purposes in View was pleased to spare me at that time.

I had no time for recollections or Considering of my danger before this, being surprized out of my sleep; but now on looking round I saw my Situation clearly. Nevertheless I did not despair of Extreccating my self in a little time, knowing full well that if by any means we cou'd get on deck so as to attack those Vermin Vigorously, they wou'd soon give way.

My first care was to place two men with Musquets in hand one on each side the Steerage, with their arms pointed upwards, cross ways to guard the Companion door, for I perceived that the Indians were watching an opportunity to take aim at some of us, of which they were now prevented. For no sooner did they offer to peep in at the door then they saw the Musle of a Musquet pointed at them from below, without being able to see the person who presented it.

I then placed another man at a Loop hole in the bulkhead of the Steerage on the Larboard side looking forward to prevent them from cutting the Cable by which we rid.

I then put on my own cloths and order'd all the people to do the same. By this time it was clear day-light.

My first intention was to begin a random firing throu the deck at the Savages, thinking thereby to clear the quarter deck and then get out. But as we might probably fire a good many shot without doing Execution, it was necessary to Examine what quantity of ammunition we had before we began. On searching we found only a pound of Powder, very bad, mix'd with dust, in the Bottom of the Barrel. This made my heart faint within me; nor could I help curseing the ill-timed Parsimony of my owners, who had reffused me Powder before I saild from Boston. 'twas in the end the loss of their Vessell and my Liberty and Verey nearly my Life.

I never doubted beating off the indians untill I found my self so short of Powder. In order therefore to make the most of what little we had 'twas Necessary to make a Push for our Lives with all the resolution immaginable.

I then told my People and Capt. Martin, as we had so Little Powder our guns could be of little use to us and that 'twas best to load each man a Pistol with which in one hand and a Cutlass in

the other we might force our way out among the indians; assuring them that they would jump over board the moment they saw us all on deck.

Capt. Martin, John Whitty my mate and Charles Connor one of the Sailors were willing to Accompany me, but the others were all against it. In vain did I tell them that in case of delivering ourselves up to such a Barbarous Enemy as the indians we could hope for nothing more then to have our lives spared untill they got drunk (which could not be long, considering the quantity of Liquor we had on board the Vessel) that therefore 'twas better to die like men endeavouring to set our selves free then to have our hands tied and be killed Like Sheep, in a few hours. No, in vain was all this repeated severall times. Nothing could rouse their Spirrits or tempt them to Exert themselves on this Ocasion.

I then began to reproach them who had by their stupid neglect betrayd me into the present delima, and now throu Cowardice refused to asist me in Extreccating my self and them. One (whose name was John Jermyne) being stung to the heart with these reproaches, said, Sir, I am not a coward, nor is it throu fear that I refuse going out with you; but 'tis because I see no probability of succeeding. In the first place there is no Possibility of getting out more than one man at a time, and he must crawl out of this doorway on hands and knees, in which case two indians with their hatchets may kill us as fast as we go up. In the second Place they are verrey numerous upon deck so that there is the less cause to Expect they will be so soon frightened overboard as you think. To convince you that I am not afraid I will go up by my self, but it shall be naked as I am, not with arms. If I live long Enough to be able to reckon them I will let you know their Number. If they kill me instantly you will know the better what to Expect and may do as you think proper. I then told him that he shou'd not go up so; for to what purpose was it to lessn our numbers by putting himself naked into their hands, when his takeing arms might be of so great Consequence to us all. He however continued to insist on it and the other People seeming to relish this proposeall better than mine, he did go up with only his Shirt and drawers on. For I could not persuade him even to put on his cloths, altho the Cold was so intense a man might have been froze to death in a little time.

On seeing him come up to them naked they did not attempt to kill him, but haveing ask'd him severall questions they Orderd him to come down again and put on his Cloaths.

At his return he told us they were thirty at least upon deck,

and appear'd all Exceeding well arm'd. We then held a Consultation what we had best do, and haveing lost all hopes of getting quit of them, we came to a resolution to give ourselves up to them, Especially if there should be none of the Mickmack Tribe amongst them. For I had come to a resolution within my self not to give my self up to them whom I had allways known to be a Cruel Bloody Bigoted Cowardly race of Vermine who took delight in shedding the blood of the English for religions Sake.

Observeing the whole time they were on board to keep a centinall on the Cable they were prevented once or twice from cutting it by my giving orders to fire at the Indian who made the attempt. Happily for us the Gun did not go off. For had we shed the blood of one of them we must have Expected no Mercy. However it had the desired Effect, which was to hinder them from Cutting.

EXTRACT FROM THE JOURNAL OF JAMES BOYD, 1764¹

Some time before Quebeck was taken from the French, Capt. Hector McNeal was taken prisoner in the harbour Le Tong. It was Indians which took him. One Frenchman, who married an Indian, was with the Indians. They gave Capt. McNeal the names of sundry places. The Indians carried McNeal's vessell to Conasquamkook [St. Andrews, New Brunswick], and there unloaded a good deal of the Cargo. McNeal had some small guns and swivels. The Indians kept one gun to give an alarm when needed. The Indians then carried the Vessell to Saint Johns River, and carried their Captives up this river to Quebeck.

FROM JAMES LOCKWOOD²

CAMP BEFORE QUEBEC, April 25th, 1776

DEAR SIR: I have just received your favour of yesterday and say in answer — The Genl³ thinks it will be better that M^r Lizott should be sent by Water than through the Country. With regard to the two Vessels, Cap^t Tenyck who takes command of Peppers Schooner has Orders to take up all suspected Vessels and boats, and those two have been mentioned to him; he will stop at Point

¹ ² *Proceedings*, III. 91. Winslow Papers. Deposition of James Boyd.

² *N. E. Hist. and Gen. Register*, XXX, 333.

³ Major-General David Wooster.

au Tremble. The Gen^l therefore desires you to direct him at any rate to secure those Vessels. he will receive proper information from you concerning them. Remember me affectionately to your family and believe me your most obed^t Serv^t

JA^s LOCKWOOD ¹

CAP^t McNEIL

[Addressed] to Capⁿ Hector McNeil at Point au Tremble.

FROM DAVID WOOSTER ²

CAMP BEFORE QUEBEC, April 26th, 1776

DEAR SIR, — I am much obliged to you for the information you give me in yours of yesterday which I have received and say in answer — I shall write Gen^l Arnold concerning the *Acadien* and also to arrest Palmer.

I have Ordered four Bar^{ls} Pork to be sent you from here, should be glad you would send two of them to Capⁿ Scott. If you can possibly procure flour at Point au Tremble I hope in a few days to be able to replace Cash for it. I am informed that M^r Cole with a large sum was left at Crownpoint and was every hour expected at Montreal.

With regard to the *Gaspee* please to procure a Pilot and put some hands on board of her from Capⁿ Church's party and send her to Jackes Cartier with Orders to be left ashore there. Let Matherman follow his Cap^t. The Articles for the *Maria* with a Gunner were sent from this place yesterday. I have sent for Capⁿ Goforth from Three Rivers, a very good man, to take charge of her — Prince, Peppers Mate, I shall send after immediately. Give me leave to congratulate you upon the Good News from Boston and believe me most affectionately your very hble Serv^t

My Comp^{ts} to your family

DAVID WOOSTER

Cap^t McNeil

[Addressed] To Capⁿ Hector McNeil at Point au Tremble.

[Superscribed] On the Service of the United Colonies.

¹ Colonel James Lockwood, aide to General Wooster.

² *N. E. Hist. and Gen. Register*, xxx, 333.

FROM THE MARINE COMMITTEE ¹

In Marine Committee. PHILADELPHIA,
Septem: 21 1776.

SIR: — In consequence of a letter from the president of Massachusetts Bay dated the 13 Instant to the President of the Congress which was by Congress referd to this Committee; we have determined to Comply with the wishes of your assembly by Ordering the Frigate ² Commanded by Capt. McNeill and that ³ by Captain Thompson of Newhampshire to be fitted immediately and proced on a Cruize on your Coast in hopes of taking the *Milford* Frigate ⁴ or of drawing her or any other Enemy away from those Seas.

We therefore authorize you to accept the Profferd assistance of the said assembly or any Committee they appoint to assist in fitting equipping arming and manning that Frigate. You are also to accept their offer of Twenty four nine Pounders (cannon) and to Cooperate with them in getting this Ship to sea with the utmost Expedition, and we agree to reimburse the State of Massachusetts Bay for all Just and necessary Expences they incurr in Effecting this Bussiness. We shall in due time also cause their Cannon to be returned, unless they think proper to make Sale of them for the use of this ship and in that case we woud choose to purchase them provided their are good guns quite suitable for the service.

You will please to purchase a proper number of swivell guns, good musketts, Blunderbusses, cuttlasses, Pikes and other arms and instruments suitable for this ship. You will apply to your state for powder, Ball, muskett shott other millitary stores to be paid or returned by the Congress and in short as this Ship will instantly go into Danger we hope nothing will be neglected that ought to be done in fitting and manning her.

We are very sincerely, Sir, Your most obedient Servant,

JOHN HANCOCK.

ROBT. MORRIS.

JOSEPH HEWES.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON.

SAMUEL CHASE.

JOSIAH BARTLETT.

¹ Mass. Hist. Soc. MSS.

² The *Boston*.

³ The *Raleigh*. Thomas Thompson was later made sixth on the list of captains.

⁴ A British man-of-war cruising in Massachusetts Bay.

P. S. If Mr. Langdon applies to you Mr. Bradford or to your State for assistance in fitting out the Frigate under his care we hope it will be granted and we shall reimburse all Just Expences and Charges. The intended Enterprize should be kept as secret as possible.

Hon. Thomas Cushing, Esq.

The above is a True Coppy. Thomas Cushing, Jun'r.

[Endorsed] The Hon'ble Thomas Cushing, Esq., Boston.

[Memorandum] Letter from Jo. Hancock Esq'r and others a Marine Committee of Congress to Thomas Cushing Sept. 21, 1776. relative to the Continental Frigate call[ed] the *Boston*, Hector McNeil Master.

MARINE COMMITTEE TO CAPTAIN MCNEILL¹

[PHILADELPHIA], September 21, 1776.

SIR, — The Assembly of Massachusetts having offered their assistance in equipping, Manning and Arming the Frigate under your command, we have accepted the same, and therefore hope you will very soon be ready for the sea. We expect the same from the Frigate in New Hampshire commanded by Captain Thompson and our design is that you should join company as soon as possible and cruize in Concert. We are informed that the *Milford* Frigate now infests the Coasts of these states and does much injury to their trade. It is our duty to prevent this soon as we are able and as the two frigates mentioned will be an over match for the *Milford* or any single frigate of the enemy, and go in quest of that or any other of the enemies Ships in those Seas, provided they be such as you are able to Cope with, and we hope in due time that you have taken, destroyed or drove the enemy off the Coast. The rank betwixt you and Captain Thompson is not yet established, you are therefore to act in Concert and consult each other in all things that relate for the good of the service, to the safety and preservation of your Ships or to the Interest and honor of the United States of America.

The Continental Agents in any State you put into will supply Provisions or any necessaries that may be wanted — to some of them you are to address your Prizes; and must advise this Committee of your proceedings as opportunitys occur. You are also

¹ *Out-Letters of the Continental Marine Committee*, I. 14.

to furnish us in due time with a Copy of your log book and Journal, and advise us of any important intelligence that may come to your knowledge. With the best wishes for your success We are Sir your friends, etc.

[Captain Hector McNeill]

INSTRUCTIONS OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE FOR CAPTAINS
JOHN MANLEY, HECTOR MCNEILL AND THOMAS THOMPSON ¹

[PHILADELPHIA], October 23, 1776

GENTLEMEN,—We expect the Continental frigates *Hancock*, *Boston* and *Raleigh*, under your respective commands, are either now ready for the Sea or shortly will be so. You are hereby directed to act in concert and Cruize together for the following purposes and on the following Stations. Your first object must be to inform yourselves in the best manner possible, if any of the British men of war are Cruizing in the bay of Boston or off the Coast of Massachusetts, and all such you are to endeavour with your utmost force to take, sink, or destroy. Having effected this service you are to proceed together towards Rhode Island and there make prize of or destroy any of the enemies Ships of war that may be found Cruizing off the Harbour or Coast of Rhode Island.

The Prizes you make are to be sent into the nearest Port. When you arrive at Rhode Island, if Commodore Hopkins ² should not be already sailed on his Southern expedition and the two frigates ³ built in that State should not be ready for the sea, in that case you are to join Commodore Hopkins and proceed with him on the said expedition, producing these orders to him to justify the measure. But if the Rhode Island frigates should be ready for the sea there will be no occasion for you or either of you to go Southward. And you will then proceed taking with you any Continental Vessel that may be at Rhode Island and ready, if Commodore Hopkins should be sailed before you come there, and proceed to Cruize against the enemies Ships and Vessels that may be found off the Coast between the Harbour of Newport and the Banks of Newfound Land.

We have no doubt from your zeal and attachment to the cause of America, that you will execute this service with all possible dispatch and vigor, and so bid you heartily farewell.

¹ *Out-Letters of the Continental Marine Committee*, 1. 42.

² Esek Hopkins, senior officer of the Continental Navy.

³ The *Warren* and *Providence*.

TO THE MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF WAR ¹

GENTLEMEN, — I am in want of good Swivel guns and as I understand there are fourteen such as would Suit very well now in Store at Rowes Wharf, which have been taken out of the Brigth *Charming Sally* and the Ship *Julius Ceasar*,

I humbly pray that you would Supply me with the above mentioned guns and their implements, the agent, or my Self will pay the price they may be apprizd at with Thanks, I am Gentlemen your Most Obed^t Servant

HECTOR McNEILL.

Boston Jan^y 1st 1777.

[Addressed] To the Hon^{ble} Board of War

TO THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS ²

To the Honourable the Council of the Massachusetts State.

GENTLEMEN, From the frequent proofs I have had of the baseness of the lower Class of Mankind, and from the proness I can observe in the different ranks above them to make use of the folly's or Vices of the common people, to serve their own particular private Views; I have often look'd with Surprise and infinite concern, on the inattention of the Fathers of this People, who are (in my Opinion) as much accountable, for the Conduct of those under their Charge, as any head of a Family can possible be suppos'd, if for want of proper regulations, they suffer the individuals under their care, to stray from the paths of Virtue. What I would more particularly point out at this time, is that there is scarcely a day passes but instances offer, of desertions from Regiments and Ships in the Continental Service, yet within my Knowledge there has not been a single instance of punishing an offender; nor is there a Law in being, to bring them to Justice. This is an evil which Gentlemen in your high distinguish'd rank sometimes hear of, but do not feel, nor are you in the least acquainted with the weight and discouragement it is to Officers who are more immediately concern'd with these unguarded Mortals, and who from the nature of their Employments, are accountable to the Publick for their line of Conduct. With what Spirit can an Officer carry

¹ Mass. Archives, CLII. 22.

² From the Gray Papers. No date; probably January, 1777.

on the publick Service, if he be not guarded by the Laws of the land, or instead of being guarded, should find himself insulted by a *petty constable* with *Benj'a Kents* Authority in his hand, for having acted consistent with his Duty, in endeavoring to stop desertion, or quell mutiny among men in the publick Service, under his command? This has been the case with some Officers already. With what Spirit can an officer advance Monies to Cloathe the Naked Objects, who offer themselves, as willing to serve in their severall Capacity's, if the next moment those Men may with impunity go away in a Privateer, or enter into any other Corps, either by Sea or Land? and run no risque by being detected? For mine own part I expect to be accountable to the publick, not only for my Conduct, but also for all Sums I receive from the Agents from time to time, and notwithstanding, I see myself Exposed to *bad Men* who may leave me, and the Service also, (as many have done) within twenty four hours after I advance them Money; yet I cannot see them pinch'd for want of Cloathing at this rude Season of the year, without giving them at least what will keep them from Perrishing with Cold. In this day of Trial your Honors know, that one Months pay will buy but little Cloathing for either Seamen or Marines, more must be advanc'd otherwise no Service can be expected from them. The Consequence frequently is, that those Men run off, either in Privateers, enter into some Regiment, or walk off to the next Town and there do by some other as they have done before by me. What recompence have I, or how is the Publick Service to be carried on in this way! how shall I be accountable for Monies thus Expended, or (which is a consideration still more alarming) what will become of the Morrals of the common people, unless a stop is soon put to such infamous practices! Would it not be consistent with the Wisdom and Justice of the Legislative body of this State, to do as in like cases has allways been done by prudent people, in time of War in all Countrys; and which is now practised by our Sister States, to the Southward of us, that is to make some regulation whereby all Travellers, on the Publick Roads, should be obliged to give an account of themselves, to proper persons of the Committee's of Safety, in each Town as they pass? This regulation would not be burthensome to honest Men but would Effectually stop all runaways of every denomination, and prevent many abuses which in our present deplorable Condition happens every day. Had such a regulation been attended to, some Months past, I had not been now loitering inactive in this port, nor would it have been in the power of the owners and Commander of the *Rising*

*States*¹ to have carried on their iniquitous Schemes and Laugh'd with impunity at your Authority.

[Memorandum] Copy to Council.

TO THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS²

BOSTON, January 30th, 1777.

GENTLEMEN: — I did apply last Monday Morning for an Order of your Honourable Board to Search a Certain Privateer call'd the *Rising States*, on board of which I had reason to think some of my Men were embark'd with an intention to desert the Publick Service.

The Order was Granted and a proper Officer appointed for that Service, but before these could be Accomplished the Vessell Sail'd.

Your Honours thought proper on further information to order Mr. Cudworth down to Plymouth, as it was reported the Privateer would call in there to receive on board a Certain Captain Thompson and others, who were to proceed on a Cruise in the Vessell Aforesaid. Mr. Cudworth did proceed to Plymouth, or near it, and return'd to this Town last evening, and reports as follows:

That being met on the road by the Hon'ble B. Genl: Warren to whom he related the Business on which he was going, the General told him that no such Vessell was or had been lately at Plymouth, on which Mr. Cudworth return'd in Company with the General and were met on the Road by our Captain of Marines whom I had dispatched after Mr. Cudworth to Assist him if Necessary.

He also returns with Genl. Warren and Mr. Cudworth and having taken Lodgings on Tuesday evening at Mr. Cushing's of Hingham, they were soon joined by the aforesaid Capt'n. James Thompson of the Brig. *Rising States* who brought with him in a Coach five sailors.

Capt: Thompson seem'd a little alarm'd at seeing Mr. Cudworth and our Officer of Marines at that place before him, but as none of the five Men with him were personally known by our officer, Mr. Cudworth let them all pass. Genl. Warren advised our Captain of Marines to return to Plymouth, which he Accordingly did yesterday Morning before the Coach or its passengers were stirring. Mr. Cudworth informs no farther of his proceedings.

¹ A privateer which sailed from Boston January 26, 1777, and in April was captured by the British.

² Mass. Arch., cxcvi. 180.

I had sent two Officers on Tuesday to Marblehead having had information that Men were to be collected at that place and sent over to Plymouth. Those Officers are now return'd and report to me that they found a Certain Mr. Fritz, now Captain of Marines, and a Certain Mr. Martin, now Carpenter of the *Rising States*, with them. They also found about Nine Men who were then waiting an opportunity to go off on board the above mention'd Brigantine, which was then in sight Lying off, and on; on the Harbours Mouth.

My Officers apply'd to the Committee, who could give them no other Assistance than to call those Officers before them, and on examination they did confess that they were bound on a Cruise on board the said Brigantine *Rising States*, but would give no farther Satisfaction.

I thought it necessary to give your Honours the above information as soon as possible; and am Your Honours most Obedient,
Humble Servant

HECTOR MCNEILL

RECORDS OF THE GENERAL COURT OF MASSACHUSETTS ¹

[Extract]

April 26, 1777. In the House of Representatives. Whereas the Ships of our Enemies are daily making Captures of Vessels belonging to the Subjects of the United States and of their Allies and Friends, even within sight of our very Towns — which, if not prevented by a Superiour Force, may ruin the Trade of the said Inhabitants, etc. and be of the worst Consequences to the Interest of the United States at large —, and whereas the Owners of numbers of Armed Vessels belonging to the Inhabitants of this and some other of the United States now ready for the Sea are willing to go and Act for twenty-five days from their Sailing in Concert with the Continental Frigates the *Hancock*, commanded by Capt. John Manly, and the *Boston*, commanded by Capt. Hector McNeil, which Frigates are represented to this House as also ready for Sea, provided Capt. John Manly be furnished by this State with the Sum of four Hundred pounds and the said Capt. Hector McNeil the sum of One thousand six hundred and thirty-five pounds, eighteen Shillings and eleven pence, to enable them to put the said Ships to Sea, the said Manly and McNeil being accountable for the several Sums by them received, Therefore it is

¹ Mass. Archives.

Resolved, that there be paid out of the Treasury of this State to Capt. John Manly for the purpose aforesaid the Sum of Four Hundred pounds; and to Capt. Hector McNeil for the purpose aforesaid the said Sum of one Thousand six hundred and thirty-five pounds, eighteen Shillings and eleven pence. They being accountable for the same respectively.

In Council Read and Concurred,

Consented to by fifteen of the Council.

In the House of Representatives. The Owners and Agents of the Privateers hereafter mentioned expect that this State will Insure their Vessels at the full amount of their Outsetts from all Dangers of Seas and Enemy while under the Command of the Officer Appointed by the Court.

The Commanders and Privates of the Private Armed Vessels expect in Case of Accident to be upon the same footing exactly that the Captains Manly and McNeil and their men are, as to pensions and one months pay. The Owners expect the Ammunition expended in time of Action on this Cruize shall be made good by this State.

If any Vessel should be parted by accident from the Fleet and should take a prize or prizes before the Expiration of the Time agreed on, the prizes so taken shall be equally divided amongst the whole Fleet as tho' they had all been in Company.

The Vessells shall Cruize under Command of Captain Manly or Commanding Officer of the Continental Ships for the term of twenty-five days from the day of Sailing, unless the Commander shall come into port and discharge them sooner.

The State shall pay a Months pay to

<i>American Tarter</i>	24	Guns	200	Men	Capt. Grimes
<i>General Mifflin</i>	20	do	200	do	Capt. Day
<i>Portsmouth</i>	20	do	180	do	Capt. Parker
<i>Brig Hawk</i>	14		80	do	Capt. Oaks
<i>Sloop Satisfaction</i>	14		100		Capt. Wheelwright
<i>Schooner America</i>	14		100		Capt. [Daniel] McNeil
<i>Schooner Active</i>	10		65		Capt. Gardner
<i>Schooner Speedwell</i>	8		60		Capt. Greely
<i>Schooner Buckram</i>	6		45		Marony

Upon their producing a Certificate of their having performed the agreement from the Commanding Officer of this Fleet . . .

The Owners shall give Bonds and the Masters be on Oath to comply with these terms and not to leave the Fleet, but through absolute Necessity untill the Time is expired . . .

Capt^m John Paul Jones
Sir

You are hereby Order'd and directed to attend at
a Court Martial tomorrow Morning at Nine o'Clock
on board the Hancock in Congress Road, There to
try the following Persons, Viz^t —

Leblun Baker. Pilote
Phillip Bap^t Sun^r?
Nath^l Winchester
Peter Sennis
Robert Stoutly
David Ensigne
Joseph Peters &
Thomas Carren

all of whom Stand Charged by Captain John
Manley Commander of the said Ship for Mutiny
Fail not

Given on board the Ship Boston in
Nantasket Road this 7th day of May 1777

Jutor W. Nail

And the Officers of the above Vessels are permitted to Inlist any man that Offer, they not belonging to the Navy or Army or any French Ship or Vessel that has or shall arrive in in this State . . .

TO JOHN PAUL JONES ¹

SIR

You are hereby Order'd and directed to attend at a Court Martial tomorrow Morning at Nine o Clock on board the *Hancock* in Congress Road, there to try the following Persons, Viz't:

LEBLUN BAKER, Pilott

PHILLIP BASS Jun'r

NATH'L WINCHESTER

PETER JENNIS

ROBERT STOUTLY

DAVID ENSIGNE

JOSEPH PETTERS and

THOMAS CARREN

all of whom Stand Charged by Captain John Manley Commander of the said Ship for Mutiny.

Fail not.

Given on board the Ship *Boston* in Nantasket Road
this 7th day of May 1777.

HECTOR MCNEILL.

TO WILLIAM MACKAY AND JONAS CLARK MINOTT ²

GENTLEMEN, — You being unanimously appointed by the Ships Company of the *Boston* as joint Agents for them to receive any prize which shall be sent in to any of the Ports of the four eastern States of New England by the said Ship — This is to direct and order you in all cases which may hereafter happen how to Conduct yourselves in the Libeling, unloading, and sale of such Prize or Prizes, Namely: as soon as any prize arrives, in this, or the States above Mention'd, you do in our Names and for our behalf — instantly Libell the same, taking care to keep our prize Master with some faithfull Persons constantly on board to attend to the unloading etc. of her Cargo. This you may do in concert with the Continental Agent, taking care that himself or some one by him appointed have sufficient warning from you to attend also, and receive whatever Share of the Goods may be allotted by Congress for the Continent their Share of the Prize. This Division must be made immediately on unloading of all such Articles as can

¹ John Paul Jones MSS., Library of Congress.

² Letter Book.

admitt of a division — the Hull of the Prize, or any thing else which cannot be divided and shared before the Sale, may be sold at publick outcry, the Money as soon as received must be divided, you taking care to Secure our parts in the most faithfull Manner — after the dividend made and you have taken our Share of the Prize into your Possession you are then to make the best of it for our advantage and keep proper Accounts of your Transactions, for which we shall allow you a Commission as in such cases is common, you will pay due attention to all such Instructions as we may hereafter send you. I am Gentlemen at the desire and in behalf of myself, the Officers and Men of the Ship *Boston* —

Dated on board the Ship *Boston*
19th May 1777.

H. McN.

TO THE MARINE COMMITTEE¹

To the Honourable the Marine Committee of
The Honourable the Continental Congress.

GENTLEMEN, — The long wish'd for hour is at last come in which I bid farewell, to the sleepy Agents, disheartned Tradesmen and distress'd Seamen who frequent the Streets of Boston.

Happy should I account myself on my return from a Successfull Cruise, were I assured to find matters better conducted in this quarter than they have hitherto been but alas, Complaints Vanish into Air and there is nobody at home knock where we will.

I have formerly taken the freedom to mention the most extraordinary conduct of the Agents in withholding prize Money and Wages from the poor distress'd Seamen who have hitherto Served in the Continental Vessells — 'tis true I have no reason of Complaint myself because I never have been in the way of taking prizes, but the common feelings of humanity for my fellow Men, and the regard for public Justice which should inspire every honest Man, makes me renew this Complaint, even at the risque of your Neglect. Is it Possible for your honest hearts to Suggest That many of the Men who first enter'd into the Service on board the Ships Equip'd at Philadelphia, Winter was a year, are now in a suffering condition, Scatter'd about our Sea Port Towns in this State; nay some who have Served as Officers are reduced to such Misery and distress that they have neither Cloaths to put on nor Victuals to eat. The cry among those unhappy Men is that they

¹ Letter Book.

can neither recover Wages nor Prize Money for their past Services — can it be expected such Men will offer themselves again when we want our Ships Man'd, — or with what face can we ask them to enter, for heavens sake Gentlemen be pleased to enquire into the cause of such Complaints, and let the Wretches who would defraud the Labourer of his hire or the honest Seaman of his just due, be brought to Light; that the Odium be not cast (by our publick enemies) on the worthy managers of our affairs — indeed Gentlemen I have seen enough of this Misconduct to believe almost any Complaint in the power of Man to make — and there are such made every day by those Suffering Mortals, would Shock the heart of a Mussulman. For mine own part, I have Suffer'd so much in fitting out the Ship I now have the Honour to Command, that I do not think I would undertake such a Task again for any Sum whatever unless I was better Supported than I have been hitherto.

The very Interest of Money which I have borrowed and advanced to Carry on the Service of this Ship, would have mentained my Family in Credits, and Mr. Cushing expects that I take all this trouble, and risque on myself without a Commission, nay I have been Obliged to quarrell for Money to pay Men and Officers their Wages up to the 31st of March last — so unreasonable has he been as to insist on the Men's going to Sea, some with Six, others Nine, and some a Twelve Months Wages due. This kind of Treatment to Officers and Men will not do, Gentlemen. They must be duely paid their prize Money as soon as the prize is Sold and the Accounts wound up. They must be paid their Wages allways up to one Month. This will enable them to support themselves and their Familys. Whereas the Mode to this time has left both to starve, on which conditions no good man will stay in the Service. For my part I will freely tell you my Thoughts, be the event what it will, or may it respect whom it will. I have no croneys, or Acquaintance to whom I will either Sacrifuse the Publick Service or rights of my Brother Seamen. I will not live, where they are oppress'd or defrauded — you will therefore I hope Excuse my plain dealing — as what I Sincerely intend is the good of the Service I am Engaged in, and I know it is impossible that can be carried on to good purpose, unless the Strictest Justice be done to the honest fellows who must do the work. To secure which my present plan is to have Agents appointed by the Ships Companys, Officers as well as Men — which Agents shall Libel and receive the true proportion of all Prize Goods allowed the Ships Company by the Resolves

of Congress and let the Continental Agent appear also and receive that Share which of right belongs to the Continent. This Rule to be observed in all things that can possibly be divided — the hull of the Prize or any thing which cannot be so divided to be Sold at Publick outcry and the N^{tt} Proceeds divided instantly to those Separate Agents for the use of their Constitutents. We have no Idea of the Justice there may be in the Continental Agents taking possession of a Prize the instant she arrives in Port — putting in creatures of his own making to attend the delivery and Sale of her Cargo — then keeping the Captors for Months and Years out of their dividend of Prize Money while they are Starving in want and Misery. This Method which I now propose if approv'd of by the Honourable Congress will cutt off all reasons of Complaint against the Publick Agent on the Score of Prize Money, and he may also be a Check on the Companys Agents; Then their will be a probability of Mens receiving their Money as soon after the Prize is Sold as Possible — Whereas the Contrary has hitherto been Manifest. We are much at a Loss how to Conduct ourselves and earnestly wish for some Solid plan for the better regulation of our affairs. I think in Conscience a Man who takes so great a Charge on himself both in providing things for the Ship and paying the Men, ought to have a Commission on the Business he does and not the Lazy Agent who rather Mars than forwards things. I submit the whole to your Candour and am with all possible respect Your most Obedient and most humble Servant,

H. McNEILL

Ship *Boston* at Sea,
21st May 1777.

Supplement to the foregoing Letter to the Marine Committee of
21st May 1777.

I cannot let this Letter go without putting you in Mind of two Sorts of Men who appear to be much Neglected by the Hon^{ble} Congress, I mean the Surgeons and Chaplains of the Navy, if something better be not done for them, you may be Assured that all the Able Men of both Professions will quit the Service.

I am Gentlemen with true respect Your most Obedient Servant

H: McNEILL

Ship *Boston* at Sea,
21st May 1777.

I777

AN ALPHABETICAL LIST OF THE NAMES OF OFFICERS
AND MEN BELONGING TO THE SHIP *BOSTON*¹

- Starb^d: watch. AUSTIN....CATO Gun No: 1
- Starb^d: watch. BOWEN....HENRY Gun N 27
- Larb^d: watch. BALCH....ISRAEL
- Larb^d: watch. BOLDERY....JOHN
- Starb^d: watch. BUSSELL....ABRAHAM
- Larb^d: watch. BROWN....JEREMIAH F. Braces & Crossjack do
- Starb^d: watch. BLASDELL....JONATHAN Gun N 7
- BLACKETT....JOSHUA Forecastle
- BROWN....SCIPIO to hand Powder main hatchway
- BALCH....THOMAS Sentinel in Ward Room
- BANGS....CHIPMAN Quart^r: Deck
- BILLIARD....JOHN Quart^r: Deck
- Larb^d: watch. BROWN....JOHN Gundeck forward [1st Lieut.]
- BALCH....BENJ^a: in the Cockpitt [Chaplain]
- Starb^d: watch. BERRY....THOMAS Gun N 3
- Larb^d: watch. BARKER....THOMAS Gun N 27
- Starb^d: watch. BURNS....PATRICK Gunn N 12
- Starb^d: watch. BEAL....EBENEZER Gun N 11
- Larb^d: watch. BROADSTREET....NORTHERN
- Starb^d: watch. BRADSTREET....HANNIBAL F. Topsail Braces
- Starb^d: watch. BATHORICK....ABEL
- Larb^d: watch. CARLETON....SAM^l: Fore Topsail Braces
- Starb^d: watch. CONNOR....PATRICK F. Braces & Crossjack do
- do CLARK....PETER Gun N 3
- do CROWNINGSHIELD....BENJ^a: Gun N 9
- do CAVEY....PETER Gun N 27
- Larb^d: watch. COSTELLOE....JOHN Gun No: 8
- Larb^d: watch. CONNELL....PHILLIP Gun No: 25
- Larb^d: watch. CUTTER....THOMAS Gun N 11
- Starb^d: watch. CROWLEY....BARTH^w: in Fore Top
- Larb^d: watch. CALEF....WINTER F. Braces & Crossjack do
- Larb^d: watch. CLOUGH....DUKE Gun N 2
- Larb^d: watch. CALDERWOOD....JOHN
- Larb^d: watch. CROWEL....WILLIAM Gun N 4
- Larb^d: watch. CARREL....JOHN Fore Top
- Starb^d: watch. COKER....WILLIAM M & Mizⁿ: T. S. Braces
- Starb^d: watch. CARR....PHINEAS Gun N 9
- Starb^d: watch. CRANE....BENJ^a:
- CHOATE....JOHN Gun N 11
- Starb^d: Watch. CATERAN....WILL^m: Gun N 4
- Larb^d: watch. CONNELL....HENRY Gun No: 2
- Starb^d: watch. CHADDOCK....JOHN

¹ From the Gray Papers.

- Starb^d: watch. COWART....CORNELIUS Fore Braces &c
 Larb^d: watch. CONNELL....PATRICK Gun N 29
 Starb^d: watch. CROWEL....CHRIST^r: Gun N 9
 Starb^d: watch. COSSA....EZEKIEL Fore Top
 Starb^d: watch. CONNELL....DENNIS to attend lights between decks
 Larb^d: watch. COUPI....JOHN F. Braces & Crossjack do
- Larb^d: watch. DAVIS....THOMAS Main Rigging
 Starb^d: watch. DALANEY....JOHN Forecastle
 Starb^d: watch. DODGE....ZACHARIAH
 Larb^d: watch. DODGE....HAMPSHIRE Gun N 10
 Starb^d: watch. DODGE....JAMES
 Starb^d: watch. DOWNS....JOSEPH
 DAVIS....WILLIAM in the Cockpitt
 Starb^d: watch. DOVRELL....THOMAS Gun N 11
- Larb^d: watch. ELMES....JAMES Main Top
 Starb^d: watch. ELMES....ELKANAH
 Starb^d: watch. ELLIOT....JOHN M & Mizⁿ: T. S. Braces
- Larb^d: watch. FARIS....WILLIAM Gun N 12
 Starb^d: watch. FRAME....ROBERT Gun N 25
 Starb^d: watch. FITZGERALD....JOHN Main Rigging
 Starb^d: watch. FITZGERALD....JAMES Gun N 12
 Starb^d: watch. FREEMAN....ADAM Gun N^o: 7
 Starb^d: watch. FOSTER....BENJ^a: — Gun N 9
 Starb^d: watch. FRENCH....JAMES Gun N 6
 Starb^d: watch. FULLERTON....JOHN M & Mizⁿ: T. S. Braces
 Starb^d: watch. FREEMAN....NERO Gun N^o: 11
 Larb^d: watch. FREEMAN....CUFF
 Starb^d: watch. FOWLES....LEMUEL Fore Top
 FARIS....JACK to hand Powder main hatch way
 FOSTER....THOMAS at the Magazine
 FURLONG....LAWRENCE Quart^r: deck
 FAIRWEATHER....CÆSAR to hand Powder fore hatch way
- Larb^d: watch. GREEN....HENRY in the Ward Room
 Starb^d: watch. GILLARD....JOHN Forecastle
 Starb^d: watch. GARRATT....JOHN Gun N 25
 Larb^d: watch. GOUGE....JAMES
 Larb^d: watch. GOTT....JOSHUA Gun N 10
 Starb^d: watch. GRIFFEN....JAMES — Gun N 9
 Larb^d: watch. GRAY....SAMUEL Gun N 4
 GILBERT....PRINCE to hand Powder fore hatch way
 GRAGG....SAMUEL to hand Powder fore hatch way
 Starb^d: Watch. GROSS....SIMON Gun deck abaft [Lieut.]
- Starb^d: watch. HARRIS....JOHN
 Larb^d: watch. HOGG....EBEN^r: — Gun N 10
 Larb^d: watch. HALL....JOHN
 Larb^d: watch. HENDERSON....JOSEPH Gun N 4
 Larb^d: watch. HARRADEN....DAN¹: — Gun N 10
 Larb^d: watch. HORNE....DAN¹:

- Larb^d: watch. MITCHELL....JOSHUA in the Hold
 Larb^d: watch. MITCHELL....JOSEPH Gun N^o: 1
 Larb^d: watch. MOULTON....BARTH^w:
 Larb^d: watch. MEHANEY....JEREMIAH St^d: M. Sh^{rds}:
 Larb^d: watch. MULCAHEY....MICHAEL Gun N 7
 Larb^d: watch. MURRAY....JOHN — Gun N 9
 Starb^d: watch. M^c:LAUGHLIN....LAW^{ce}: Gun N^o: 10
 Starb^d: watch. MASCOLL....JOSEPH larb^d: Mⁿ: Shrouds
 Starb^d: watch. McNEILL....CHARLES to attend lights between decks
 Larb^d: watch. MOODY....SAMUEL Main Top
 Larb^d: watch. MUGFORD....W^m: Gun N 6
 Starb^d: watch. MULLING....W^m: Gun N 25
 Starb^d: watch. MESCHINET....Jn^o: in the Cockpitt
 Starb^d: watch. McELROY....DAVID M & Mizⁿ: T. S. Braces
- Larb^d: watch. NOBEL....MARK Gun N^o: 7
 Starb^d: watch. NOWELL....SAM^l: Gun N 3
 Starb^d: watch. NOCK....JAMES
 Starb^d: watch. NEWMAN....W^m:
 Larb^d: watch. NICHOLS....Rob^t: Gun N^o: 1
 Larb^d: watch. NOWLAN....RICH^d:
- Starb^d: watch. O BRIEN....WILL^m: Gun N 4
 Larb^d: watch. O BRIEN....JOSEPH Gun N 2
 Larb^d: watch. OSGOOD....NEHEMIAH Gun N 29
- Starb^d: watch. PARROTT....JOHN M & Mizⁿ: T. S. Braces
 Starb^d: watch. PETTIT....JOSEPH F. Braces & Crossjack do
 Larb^d: watch. PARSONS....ZACCHEUS Gun N 12
 Larb^d: watch. PARKER....CALEB — Gun N 9
 Larb^d: watch. PERKINS....THOMAS
 Larb^d: watch. PETTINGALE....EPHRAIM Gun N 4
 Starb^d: watch. PARKER....THOMAS Fore Top
 Larb^d: watch. PLUNKET....ABRAHAM
 Larb^d: watch. PHELPS....AHOLIAH
 Larb^d: watch. PEDERSON....HANTS Gun N 5
 Starb^d: watch. PEIRCE....BENJ^a: Gun N 7
 Starb^d: watch. POTTER....JOHN
 Larb^d: watch. PERRY....JACOB
 Starb^d: watch. PHILBROOK....JOEL
 Larb^d: watch. PITTS....BOSTON Fore Braces &c
 Starb^d: watch. PETTERS....POMP Gun N 8
 Starb^d: watch. PAINE....RICHARD Gun N 3
 Larb^d: watch. PARSONS....W^m: Gun N 12
 Larb^d: watch. PARKER....JOSEPH Fore Top
 PALMES....RICHARD [Capt. Marines]
- Larb^d: watch. ROGERS....CHACE Gun N^o: 6
 Starb^d: watch. ROPES....WILLIAM Gun N 2
 Larb^d: watch. RYAN....MICHAEL Gun N^o: 5
 Starb^d: watch. RICKER....JOHN to attend the lights between decks

Starb ^d : watch.	STOCKBRIDGE....SAM ^l :
do	SMITH....JOHN — at the Wheel
Larb ^d : watch.	SMITH....ANDREW Gun N 2
Larb ^d : watch.	SHAW....THOMAS Forecastle
Starb ^d : watch.	STILES....RICHARD Miz ⁿ : Mast
Starb ^d : watch.	SNOOKS....WILLIAM Main Top
Starb ^d : watch.	SLEEPER....JOHN — in the Hold
Larb ^d : watch.	SMITH....JOSEPH
Larb ^d : watch.	SHERBURNE....THO ^s :
Larb ^d : watch.	SAMPSON....NATH ^l :
Starb ^d : watch.	SIMS....JAMES Fore Top
Starb ^d : watch.	STOROW....JETHRO Gun N 12
Starb ^d : watch.	SPRAGUE....LABON
Starb ^d : watch.	SWEETLAND....RICH ^d : Gun N 5
	SAWYER....MOSES in the Cockpitt
Starb ^d : watch.	SHOOT....ADAM in Fore Top
Larb ^d : watch.	SULLAWAY....JOHN
Starb ^d : Watch.	TAPPING....BENJ ^a : Gun N 10
Larb ^d : watch.	TAYLOR....JAMES Gun N 3
Starb ^d : watch.	TOBINE....PATRICK Gun N 8
Larb ^d : watch.	TERRY....LONDON Gun N 5
Starb ^d : watch.	THORNTON....JAMES Main Top
Starb ^d : watch.	TIFFT....MATHEW Gun N 1
Larb ^d : watch.	TREE....FRANCIS Gun N 2
Larb ^d : watch.	WEBBER....DAN ^l : Main & Miz ⁿ : Top S ^l : Braces
Larb ^d : watch.	WILLSON....JOHN Gun N ^o : 2
Larb ^d : watch.	WHALON....AND ^w : Gun N 12
Larb ^d : watch.	WISDOM....JOHN Gun N 12
Larb ^d : watch.	WELCH....WALTER — Fore Top
Larb ^d : watch.	WISE....W ^m : to hand Powder after hatch way
Larb ^d : watch.	WOODBERRY....CORNELIUS
Larb ^d : watch.	WEBB....JOHN — Gun N ^o : 8
Starb ^d : watch.	WOOD....JOHN
Larb ^d : watch.	WILLSON....JAMES Main Top
Starb ^d : watch.	WOODMAN....BENJ ^a : Gun N 6
Larb ^d : watch.	WOOD....CATO Fore Topsail Braces
Larb ^d : watch.	WINSLOW....NICHOLAS to hand Powder after hatchway
Starb ^d : watch.	WATERS....WILLIAM
Starb ^d : watch.	WETHERELL....ABEL to hand Powder main hatchway
Starb ^d : watch.	WILLIAMS....BENJ ^a :
	WOODWELL....GIDEON in the Hold
Starb ^d : watch.	WASHBURN....GIDEON
Starb ^d : watch.	WILLIAMS....CHARLES
Starb ^d : watch.	WOOD....CUFF F. Braces & Crossjack
Starb ^d : watch.	WOODBERRY....LEMUEL Gun N 1
Larb ^d : watch.	WRIGHT....W ^m : Gun N 7
Starb ^d : watch.	WEBBER....RICHARD Gun N 10
	WOODMAN....DANIEL Gun N 3
Starb ^d : watch.	WOODWELL....GIDEON JUN ^r : Gun N 1
Larb ^d : watch.	WELCH....HEZEKIAH, in the Waist [Lieut.]

A JOURNAL OF OUR INTENDED CRUSE IN THE GOOD SHIP *BOSTON*

Bound out a Cruse by God's parmission.

HECTOR MCNEILL, Esq'r, Commander.¹

On the 21 of May at 12 on meriden the Commadore fird Signal for Sailing. The fleet got under way at 2 p.m. and stood to Sea so God be pleased to send us to our desired port againe in Safty. This 24 hours Ends with a fresh Breeze. Nothing Remarkable.

Thursday, *May* the 22. At 6 in the morning made the Land in off Boston. At 10 a.m. Bore away for the Eastern point. At 11 the *tartar*² Joned us and a small privetare³ Commanded by one Capt. Morone. She Inform us that She spake a Scooner from Cape Cod that was Chaced in by two frigats belongin to the British tyrants. It is Supposed that we are a goin in pursute of them. Their is 2 frigats and 2 20 Guns Ships and 6 armed Vesels of us all. This 24 hours ends Clear and pleasant.

Friday, 23. This 24 hours Begins with a fresh Breeze. Lay of and on. Capt. M's Boat Came on Bord. Cape Ann Bore NNE Dist. 4 Leag. Stood to the N.

At 2 a.m. Wore Ship. Laid hir head to the So. At 8 a.m. Cape Ann Bore NWBW Dist. 7 Leagues. Nothing Remarkable this 24 hours.

Saturday the 24 of *May*, 1777. This 24 hours Begins with a Moderate Breze and Clear weather. At 6 p.m. TK [tacked] Ship Laid hir head to westward. Hald up the Coursees handed the Staisels.

At 8 p.m. saw a Saile to Leward. Bore up for hir. Sat F. S. and mizen. At 11 p.m. tack Ship. At 2 p.m. saw Capt. Manly in Chace of a Ship. At 3 p.m. saw Cape Ann. We Bore a way two for the Chace with all Sails sot. Chaced hir in off portsmouth. It proved to be the *portsmouth*⁴ frigate Capt. parcker Commander. So Ends this 24 hours with moderate weather, 9 Saile of the fleet in sight.

Sunday, *May* 25. This 24 hours Begins with Clear weather and Small Brezes of wind. At 4 p.m. portsmouth Bore NBW dist. 5 Leagues. At 6 the Isle of Sholes Bore WBN dist. 4 Legues. Lay two with hir head to the SE with the FTS to the mast. At 8 p.m. Spake the Commoder. At 4 a.m. made saile. At 10 a.m. the fleet hove two. Saw the Land.

¹ From the Gray Papers.

² The privateer *American Tartar*.

³ Schooner *Buckram*, Captain Marony.

⁴ The privateer *Portsmouth*.

At 12 or meridian Wood Island Bore NWBW Distance 3 Leagues. From that I tacke my departure Being in the Latitude of 43.43 and Longitude 68.18 W.

Monday, 26. This 24 hours Begins Hazey weather. At 2 p.m. set the F. hove the mizen T.S. to the mast to speak the Commander. At 3 a.m. the *Mifline*¹ Bore a way for falmouth. She had the small pox on Bord.

No Obs.

Tuesday the 27. This 24 hours Begins Strong Gails and Drizlen Raine. Parted with all the fleet but one and that is the Commadore. Latter part of this 24 hours ends with Strong Gails and Shiped a Great Deal of water. Distance per Log 100 mils.

No Obs.

Wednesday the 28. This 24 hours Begins with a fresh Gale and a heavey Sea under Reeft Courses. At 6 p.m. Capt. Manly came up and Joined us. At 10 Hald up the M. S.

Latter part of this 24 hours ends with Strong Gails and Larg Sea from the Eastward.

No Obs. to day.

Thusday, 29th. This 24 hours Begins with a fresh Breze and Clear weather. Capt. Manly in Company with us. Nothing Remarkable.

Friday 30. This 24 hours Begins with modrate Breaze and a heavey Sea from the Eastward. At 6 p.m. saw a Saile to the So. Gave Chace. At $\frac{1}{2}$ past 7 Came up with the Chace witch proved to be a Brig from London Bound to York Laden with Marchandize who Gave us Intelligence that she sailed in company with 7 Sail of transports having on Bord 3500 troops under Convoy with the *Sumer Set* [*Somerset*] of 64 Guns and the *Marcerry* [*Mercury*] of 28 Bound for York. At 5 a.m. saw 4 Saile to windward Standing to the west. Gave Chace and Cleard Ship for Engagement. Lay by till they Came with in Gun Shot of Capt Manly. We Stood a Long upon a wind in order to Cut of Some of the transports. She fird Sevrall Guns at Capt. Manly and he Returned the Same.

Saturday, May 31, 1777. This 24 hours Begins with Modrate Breaze and a tumbling Sea.

The *Sumer Set* Still in Chace of us. Capt. Manly to Leeyard all most out of sight. At 6 p.m. she tack Ship and Stood for hir Ship. Latter part Ends with Cloudy. L. 37.51.

Sunday, June the 1 1777. This 24 hours Begins with a fresh Gale and Large Sea witch makes our Ship Labour and Ship much water.

¹ The privateer *General Mifflin*.

Capt. Manly in Company. Ends with fresh Gails and Raine.
38.01.

Monday 2d. This 24 hours Begin with fresh Gails and Cloudy weather. At 6 p.m. Spake Capt. Manly who desires us to hall to the South ward while he to the No. to keep the Better Lookout.

Tuesday 3. This 24 hours Begins a Modrate Breze and Squalley with Raine.

Wednesday the 4 of *June*. This 24 hours Begins with Light Breze and Clear weather.

Thursday the 5. This 24 hours Begins with Modrate Breze and hazey weather. All hands Employ'd a Bout Sundres Needfull.

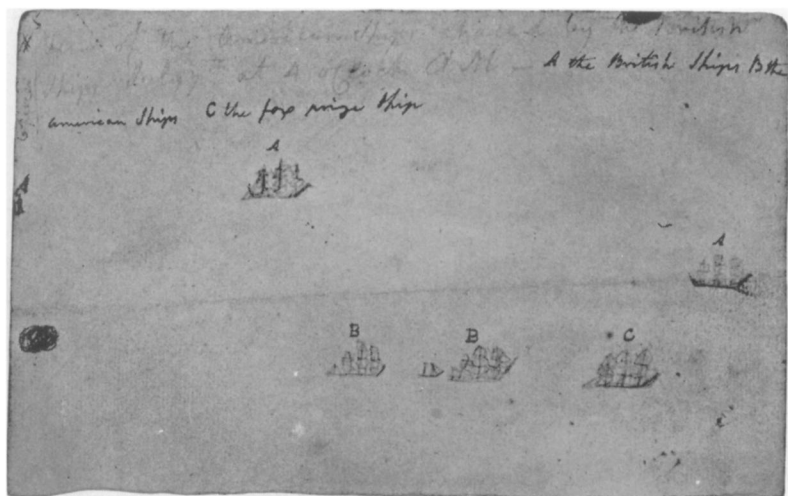
Friday the 6. This 24 hours Begins with pleasant weather. At 3 p.m. Capt. Manlys Boat Came on Board. At 4 p.m. Saw a Saile Leeyard. At 6 Do. Came up with hire. She proved to be a Brig from St. Johns a fishing on gran Bank. Histed out our Boat and went on Board took out the priseners and Set hir on fire. Saw a Small Scooner to Leeyard.

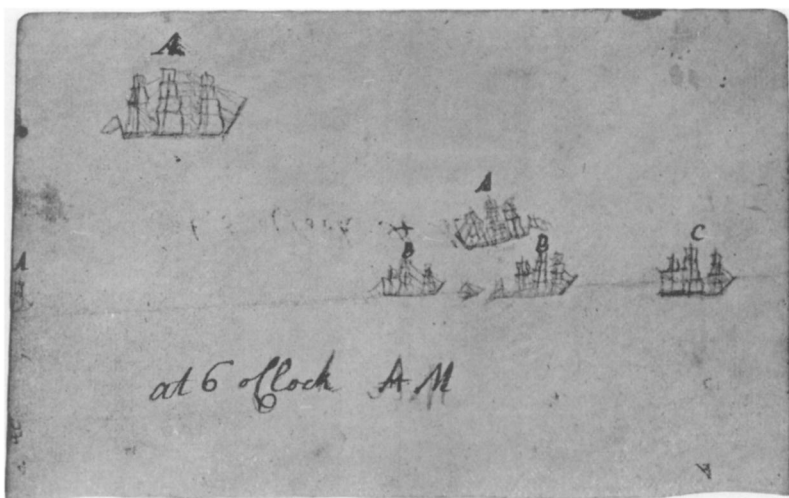
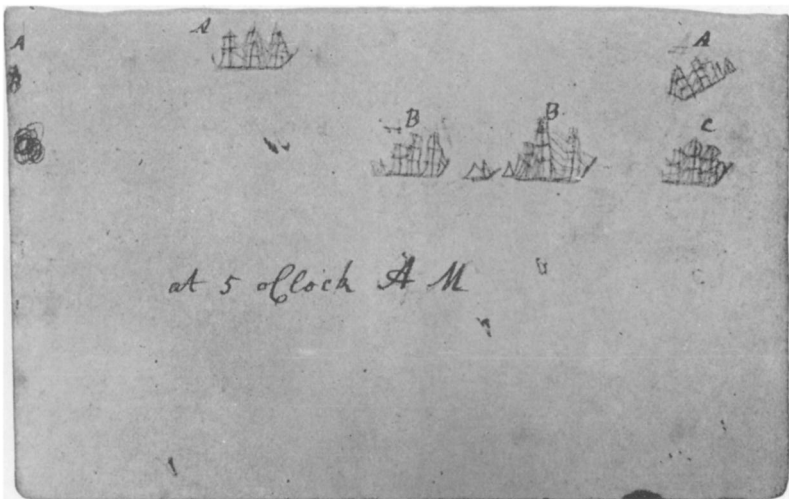
Saturday, *June 7, 1777*. The first part of this 24 hours was foggey. At 4 P.M. it Cleard a way. Capt Manly sent his Boat on Board of us. One of His Lievt. Mr. Adams came to acquaint us of what Signels to make in a fogg. At 6 p.m. see a Saile to Lewaid we Bore Down to hire when we Came up with hire we found hir to be a fishing Vessaile Belong to Dartmouth in England. Capt. Manly sent his Boat on Bord and we sent our Boat on Bord, took the people out and Sundery Small things and Set hir on fire and then we Steard NNE all Night. At Day Light we see Sevrall Small Bankers. At 5 a.m. we made a Larg Ship Laying by our two Ships. Stood for hire; at 6 a.m. Capt. Manly and she Exchanged some guns and then she Runn and we in full Chace after hir.

Sunday 8, 1777. This 24 Begins with fresh Breze and Larg Sea. Betwixt the Hour of 12 and one P.M. Capt. Manly Began to Engage Broide Side and Broide Side, our Ship Coming up fast as Posable at Last we Came up and Gave them a Noble Broid Side witch made them to Strike a meadeatly a Bout half after one. Capt. Manly had some men killed and so had the frigate Cald the *fox*. Besides Both frigates ware Damaged in their Sails and Rigen. The *fox* had some of hir yards shot away. We had but little Damage done to us, no Life Lost thanks Be to God and after the Engage was over the fishing vesels tacking us to be British Ships they Came down to us for purtection.

Monday the 9. This 24 hours Begins with fresh Brezes and

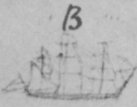
*Sketches by Captain McNeill
illustrating the chase and
engagements of July 7, 1777.
(Gray Papers)*







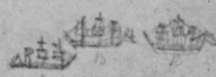
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half after 6 AM



TS



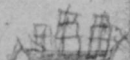
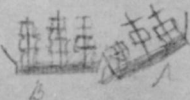
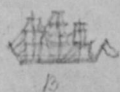
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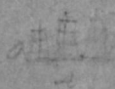
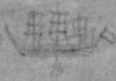
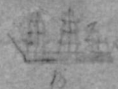
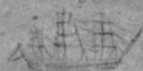
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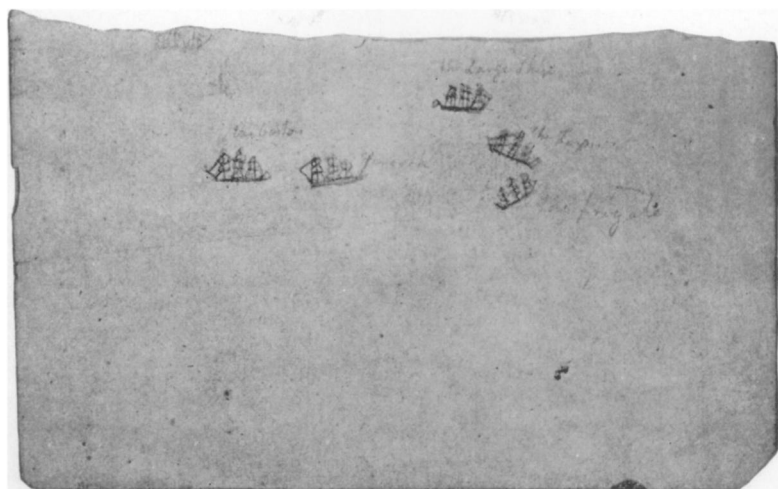
Rock



See after twelve o'clock



See after twelve o'clock



Cloudy. Employd Gitting the prize in order to Cruse with us 10 Saile of fishermen in Sight.

Tuesday the 10 *June*. This 24 hours Begins Cloudy weather. Nothing Remarkable.

Wednesday the 11 *June*. This 24 hours Begins with Small winds and vrearable. The *fox* and *handcock* in Company.

Thursday the 12. First part of this 24 hours Begins with Cloudy weather. At 10 a.m. saw two Sails to the Eastward made saile for them. Came up with them found them to be 2 of our Concorats that saild in Company with us.

Friday the 13. This 24 hours Begins with Clear weather and pleasant.

Saturday the 14. This 24 hours Begins with a fresh Breze.

Sunday the 15. First part of this 24 hours Begins with pleasant weather. Parted with Capt. Grely.¹

Monday the 16. This 24 hours Begins with Cloudy weather and a Larg Sea from the Eastward.

Tuesday the 17 of *June*. This 24 hours Begins with a pleasant Breaze. At 3 p.m. saw a Saile to the westward. TK [tacked] Ship, stood for hir. She proved to be Spannish Brig.

Saw a Nother Saile to Leeyard. Capt. Manly Gave Chace for hir. Came up with hire. She proved to be a French Ship from Cape franceway. At 8 a.m. saw a ship to Leeyard made Saile. She prove to Be a Spannish Ship. Parted with Capt. Gardner in a small privtere.²

Wednesday the 18 of *June*, 1777. This 24 hours Begins with hazy weather and something Cloudy.

Thursday the 19 1777. This 24 hours Begins with Clear and pleasant weather. At 10 a.m. Thomas Shaw fell from the main top mast Cap Down in the m. top and Cracked his Scull in two places and all most dead.

Friday the 20 of *June*. This 24 hours Begins with Clear and pleasant weather.

Saturday the 21 of *June*. This 24 hours Begins with a fresh Breeze and Clear.

Sunday the 22 of *June*. This 24 hours Begins with Modrate.

At 4 p.m. Mr. Hill Come on Bord after some offercer to Gow on Bord the *fox*. Their went on Bord Mr. Groce and Mr. Milen and Mr. Knowls.

Monday the 23 of *June*. This 24 hours Begins with Cloudy weather.

¹ Commanding the schooner *Speedwell*, privateer.

² The schooner *Active*.

Tuesday the 24 of *June*. This 24 hours Begins with Clouse Cloudy weather and a few Shours of Raine.

Wednesday the 25 of *June*. This 24 hours Begins with Clear and pleasant weather and Smooth Sea. Got up to[p]G yard.

Thursday the 26. This 24 hours Begins with a fresh Breze and Cloudy. At 1 p.m. Gave over Chaceing a Small Scooner took hir to be one of the amaracan priveters. No Obs'r.

Friday the 27. This 24 hours Begins with a fresh Breeze and full of fogg. No Obs'r.

Saturday 28. This Begins with Clear and pleasant weather. Latter part ful of fogg.

Sunday 29. This 24 hours Begins full of fogg.

Monday 30. This 24 hours Begins modrate and Hazy weather.

Tuesday *July* 1. This 24 hours Begin with fogg weather and full of Raine.

Wednesday *July* 2. This 24 hours Begins with hazey wather and small Raine.

Thursday the 3. This 24 hours Begins with fresh Gales.

Friday the 4 of *July*. This 24 hours Begins with Hazy weather. At 7 full of fogg in all Small Sailes. At 7 p.m. spoke the *fox* they tould us that they had Lost Joshua Mitchel over Bord. At 8 p.m. hove two and Sounded found 45 fathom of water. At 9 made Saile. At 6 a.m. hove two and Caught Sevrall Codfish.

Saturday the 5 of *July*. This 24 hours Begins Hazy weather. Caught Sevrall Cusk

Sunday the 6 of *July*. This first part Small winds and very foggey. At 4 a.m. a Squall of Raine Shifted the wind to the Norrad and fine Clear weather made the Land. At 5 a.m. see a Saile Barring WSW at 8 oclock came up with hir. She was a Sloop from Spanish River Bound to Halifax Capt. Hinkston, Command. We have made a prise of hir and Capt. Manly has got hir in tow. At 8 a.m. hoisted out the Pinnis and Capt. McNeill sent Leut. welch on Bord Capt. Manly with a Letter and at his Return the Pinnis went on Bord the *fox* with the Doctor to Tarrey.

Mounday, *July* 7, 1777. At 12 p.m. Cape Sables Bore WBN Dist. a Bout 7 Leag. This 24 hours attended with Pleasent weather, Light wind. At 6 oclock p.m. see two vesails¹ to the Eastward of us. At 4 a.m. see them again Bearring to the Eastwart. Still at 5 a.m. made a Saile² Bairring to W, we going WbS. She past us and gave us two guns, as soon as she got in our wake She put a Bout and stood for us and came up with us fast and we

¹ The British ship *Rainbow* and brig *Victor*.

² The British frigate *Flora*.

playd a way with our Stairn Chases. At 11 a.m. Capt. Manly and the *fox* and frigate till Darck and could see the frigate two guns after 11 we began to Engage and had it very warm. the *fox* being to Lewyard the frigate at hir and she Run be fore the wind. Ther was a two Decker ¹ under our Lee, we ware a Stopping our Shot holes, we thought Not Safe to follow.

Tuesday, *July* 8. This 24 hours Light winds Pleasant weather. At 12 p.m. Capt. Manly put a Bout Stood after the *fox*, the two Decker gave Chace to him and fird Sevrals guns. He stood away as fast as posable. The frigate ² and *fox* made a Running fight, they stood away a Bout NNE, we stood about NWBN. We lost Sight of Capt. Manly a Bout 4 p.m. But we keep Sight of the *fox* and our Ship put a Bout and stood for hir; at 35 Minnites shot off the *fox*, and thought the *fox* gaind of hir. The frigate mounted 32 or 36 Guns. We are Surrounded with Ships all Round. At 5 a.m. we heard Guns for a Long time. We Expect some Engagement Soon. We had one Wasborn kiled out Rig[ht], one Green a Quarter master wounded in the Leg, had it Cut of at 8 p.m., died at 4 A.M. See the Land.

Wednesday the 9. At 12 p.m. the Sile [Seal] Islands Bore N Dist. a Bout 6 Leg'e at 8 p.m. they Bore E't a Bout 9 Le'e.

The first part of this 24 hours Modrate pleasant we going under all the Saile that we Could Tack, the Latter part a fresh Gale in all Small Sailes. Expecting Every moment to make the Land. Saw a plenty of Rock wead and old Logs of wood. I Could heartily wich the *Hancock* and *fox* was with us for we are all Most in a Good harbour thanks Be to God.

Thusday the 10 of *July*. The first part of this 24 Hours foggey. Sounded Seveiral tims got Bottom from 50 to 60 and 70 fathom. Cach plenty of Mackrell and Cod. At 4 a.m. the fogg cleard away and we made the Land off Menheagin [Monhegan] and fine and pleasa[nt] weather. A Number of Small Craft afishing. At 5 oclock this afternoon we Came to an anchor in Sheeps Gut River all well Bord. We have had Sevrals men on Bord witch Informes us that the *Milford* ³ has Bin up the River.

Fryday 11. This day pleasant weather. At 10 clock a.m. waide anchor. Came up the River as far as wishcasset Point ware we Murrey Came on Bord and sume more of the Pornceple men of the town.

Saturday ye 12 of *July*. This Day Modrate Pleasant weather the wind to the Eastward. Laying at anchor in Sheeps Gut.

Sunday ye 13 of *July*. This Day Pleasant weather the wind to

¹ The *Rainbow*.

² *Flora*.

³ A British frigate.

the Eastward. Our Capt. with Sevrall Gentlemen went to townsend [Boothbay Harbor] in the Barg. Nothing Remarkable.

Mounday ye 14 of *July*. This day Nothing Remarkable. Fine pleasent weather. The Capt. Returned from towns End.

Tuesday ye 15 of *July*. This day fine Pleasent weather but very warme. The Comt. of Saifty came on Bord to see Capt. McNeill. For my part i hope that we shall Sail from hear Son.

Wednesday ye 16. This day very pleasant weather. At 4 a.m. Creand Ship Cleand hir Bottom and paid it with Sope and tallow. Nothing Remarkable.

Thusday ye 17. This day very pleasant weather. We have watered our Ship and wooded and have onmored So that the first wind that will Permit us to gow down River I Expect we shall go. Our Prisseners fourteen in Number set of this Day for Boston. I have mored our Ship how Long to Stay God onley knows. Parson hope we shall away to Morrow.

Fryday 18. This day very pleasent weather Light wind but very variable. We are all Redy to gow down the River.

Saturday 19. This day Pleasent weather. Nothing Remarkable. The wind is at the Southward we Cant Git dow[n] the River.

Sunday 20 of *July*. This Day Nothing Remarkable a most of the Officers a Shore to Meating.

Mounday 21. This day Pleasant weather. Our Master and Pilot gone after some Provisions for the Ship. We are waighting for a wind to git out. Capt. McNeill Rec'd a Letter from Pourtsmouth from Capt. Tomson¹ by an Express. I hope to be their very Soon my Self.

Tuesday 22. This Morning Raine wind NNE. We hove up at 6 a.m. came down the River. Fine Breze. Left our parson on Shore. The wind Soon grew Small and Came to the Southward. We beat some time. Lost ground. It Sot in very foggey. at 6 p.m. Came to an anchor and Cought some fresh fish and as we Come out we saw a Ship standing to the westward witch we took to be a prise, thou we have had Not the Good fortain to tacke any.

Wednesday 23. This day pleasent weather. At 8 a.m. came to Saile with the wind to the Northward and Stood to the Westward.

Thusday 24 of *July*. This Morning Begins of Cape Elizabeth. Small wind to the Southward. Bore away. Came in to falmouth and Came to anchor a Bout 10 oclock a.m. we mord Ship.

Fryday 25 of *July*. This day Pleasent weather winds to the Southward. Nothing Remarkable. We keep Employd a bout the Ships Duty. Our Capt. dined on Shore.

¹ Captain Thomas Thompson, Continental Navy.

Saturday 26 of *July*. This day Pleasant weather, the wind to the Southward. Now way Likely for a wind to go away. Our people Brewing Bear. Nothing very Remarkable.

Sunday 27 of *July*. This day we had a Sermon on Bord. Nothing Rema[rkable].

Mouday 28 of *July*. This day Pleasant weather small winds to the Southward. Our People on Shore a Brewing. Our pinnes Employd a fishing.

Tuesday 29 of *July*, 1777. This morning very Calm and warm the Middle part Raine and Some Thunder the Latter part Pleasant. We are still Brewing Bear.

Wednesday 30, 1777. This Morning very pleasant wind to the Northward. Expecting we should come to Saile and go for Pourtsmouth but disapointed. At 7 oclock our Pinnis went on Shore. Brought of 4 Quarters of Beef. At 10 a.m. had a man flogd 3 Doz. Our Capt. Came on Bord with Sevrall Gentlemen and orderd all hands to Quarters a Medeatly their was a Larg Ship a Comeing in. It proved to be a prize.

Thuesday, *July* 31, 1777. This day Pleasant weather wind to the Southward. Nothing very Remarkable. Arrived hear Capt. Greenleaf from Newbery to day and prise Brigg. Our Capt. and Doctor and Mr. Balch dined on Shore.

Fryday, *Aug't* 1, 1777. This 24 hours winds to the Northward. Latter part to the South. A Number of Gentlemen dined on Board to day with the Capt. and when they went on Shore we gave them a selute of Seven guns. This Day Mr. Winter Calf came on Board to see us. He Left Boston a Munday. Reports of a Number of Ships Cruseing between hear and Boston think it Not Safe to go from hear at preasent.

Saturday *Aug't* 2, 1777. This day Light winds to the Southward very warme. Our People on Shore a Brewing. Towards the Eaving we had thunder with Raine.

Sunday *Aug't* 3 1777. This day Pleasant very warme. Capt. palms went on Shore and Mr. Welch Likewise to hear the prest.

Mouday *Aug't* 4 1777. This day Pleasant weather wind to the North East. No thoughts of Saileing. I know not when we shall. This Day arived two prise Briggs and one Brigg belonging to hear from St. Crux and a Ship from Bilbo with Anchor and Cables for the two 74 Gun Ships. Our Barg was sent to help hir in witch they did at a bout 12 oclock at Night all hand Employd Gitting of[f] a Ship that had Rune on Shore the Day before.

Tuesday, *Aug't* 5, 1777. This day thick foggey weather. We have got our Ships Sides Scraped. The wind being to the Eastward Sevrall vessails Came in hear. Nothing very Remarkable.

Wednesday, *Aug't 6, 1777.* This day Pleasant wather most part of the Day. The Latter part foggey and some Showers of Raine the wind small and variable.

Thusday, *Aug't 7, 1777.* This Day very warme wind to the Southward. We have Paid our Ships Sides with tare.

Fryday, *Aug't 8, 1777.* This day pleasant weather the wind to the Southward. We have no thoughts of going at preasent. This Day a Rived Prise Brigg Loaded with Salt tacking by a Schooner from Beaverly.

Saturday, *Aug't 9, 1777.* This Day very warm wind to the South ward. We are Laying hear with a Number of vessails waighting for a wind. We have a plenty of wood and water and Bear on Bord. Nothing Remarkble.

Sunday, *Aug't 10.* This morning a fine Breze of wind at NNW. Several Coasters and Marchants Vessails went out Bound for the westward. At a Bout 7 oclock in the Morning the Capt. came upon the Deack and Orderd us to unmore as fast as we could. He went on Shore him Self. We got unmord, cleared, and Bout 12 oclock we Brock Ground and Came out with a fine Breze and as we Came out of the Sand we see a Brigg witch we took to be a vessaile of force Standing to the westward in full Chase after us and Came up with us fast and got the wind of us. We put a bout to Speake with hir but found we Could Not. We gave hir Several Shot but Could Not Bring hir two. She got in Shore of us and we Stood along againe to the westward with a very Small wind witch came to the Southward and then we whase oblige to Tack Backwards and forwards.

Mounday, *Aug't 11.* This 24 hours small winds to the Southward. At day Light made the Isle of Sholes a Brigg and a Ship after us. At 12 oclock we got into Pourtsmouth came to anchor in company with Capt. Tompson and Capt. Heyman.¹ Nothing Remar[kable].

Tusday, *Aug't 12.* This Day pleasant weather. Capt. McNeill and Capt Tompson went to town. Two off Officers Belonging to the *Alford* [*Alfred*] dined on Bord.

Wednesday, *Aug't 13, 1777.* This Day pleasant weather Light winds. Our Capt. came from town. He is Determined to go to Boston the first wind.

Thusday, *Aug't 14, 1777.* This Day very warme weather small winds. Nothing very Remarkable. I hope to have a wind soon that will carrey us to our desired port.

¹ Thomas Thompson and Elisha Hinman, commanding the Continental frigate *Raleigh* and the ship *Alfred*.

Fryday, *Aug't* 15, 1777. This Day attended with Variable winds and Rainey weather the first part pleasent. Nothing Remarkable.

Saturday, *Aug't* 16. This day Pleasent weather the first part the wind was to the Northward Latter part to the Southward. At 4 oclock in the Morning we unmored our Ship, the Capt. Come on Bord, we got under way as fast as posable we Could, but the flood tide making so strong against us that we Could not git out But was obliged to Come to anchor againe. When we shall git out I know not for I think we are unlockey.

Sunday, *Aug't* 17, 1777. This Day pleasent the wind to the Eastward at Sun Rise we hove up and tryed to git out but the flood tide macking and the wind so Light we was Obliged to Come to Anchor again.

Mounday, *Aug't* 18. At 5 oclock this Morning the wind being to the NNE we hove up and Came out with a fine Brease of wind which Brought us up with Cape Ann and then it fell to a small Brease. We Saild a Long and at 8 oclock in the Eaving we Came to anchor in Merblehead.

Tuesday, *Aug't* 19. This Day attende with Light winds to the Southward So that we Cant Git out. Our pinnis is gone to Salem with our people that is Sick and Sevrall others is gone to Sea their frinds. We shifted our Birth and went further up the harbour.

Wednesday, *Aug't* 20. This day Light winds to the Southward. We are gitting our Vessaile in trim for Sailing and fixing quarter Neting. I am in hopes we shall soon git out of this Place and git to Boston.

Thusday, *Aug't* 21. At 4 oclock this morning hove up at Marble Head. Came out with the wind at South. We got in as far as Niches Mate at 2 oclock in the After Noon it Being high warter we Came to Anchor parted our Small Bower Cable Let go the Best Bower Brought up at 9 oclock hove up Turnd up as far as Specti[c]al [Island] and then Came to anchor againe thanks Be to God we are Safe a Rived to the port ware we Belong.

This a true Copey of Benjamin Crowninshie[ld's] Journal on Board the *Boston* Frigate, Hector McNeill Esq'r Commander.

TO COMMITTEE OF POWNALLBOROUGH¹

To the Gentlemen of the Committe of Safety for the Town of Pownalborough [Wiscasset].

GENTLEMEN

As friends to your Country, and Men intrusted with the publick affairs of this place in particular, I request the favour of your Company on Board the *Boston* Frigate this forenoon, I having something to propose to you concerning the publick Service. I am Gentlemen Your most Obedient Servant

H. McN.

Ship *Boston* 12th July 1777.

TO THE MARINE COMMITTEE¹

To the Hon'ble The Marine Committe of Congress at Philadelphia.

GENTLEMEN

I think it my duty to give you as particular an account of my late Cruise as the hasty departure of the present opportunity will admit of.

On the 21st of May I sail'd from Nantasket in Company with Capt: Manley and eight or Ten small Privateers, some of whom parted with us by choice, and the remainder by bad weather in Six days after we Sail'd; Captain Manley and myself were so lucky as to keep Company except Two Nights in the worst of the Gale of Wind which happened to be easterly.

On Thursday afternoon the 29th of May we fell in with a small Brigg from London for New York which we took, and Man'd that Evening, they acquainted us that they came out under Convoy of the *Somersett*² and *Mercury*³ with 16 Sail of Transports having on board about 3500 Troops, for Reinforcing the British Army at New York.

At break of day the 30th we discover'd the *Somersett* and three large Ships under her Convoy. Capt: Manley was not convinced of the size of our Opponent untill she was within Shott of him, when very Luckily for him the *Hancocks* Heels saved his Bacon. She nevertheless pursued him with great earnestness untill I tack'd upon her Convoy who was a good way a stern of her at that time. as soon as she saw me within random Shot of them, she left Capt: Manley and return'd to their protection. She then chac'd me about

¹ Letter Book.

² British 64-gun ship.

³ British frigate.

six hours but not being able to come up with me she rejoin'd her Convoy just as night came on.

Capt: Manley and myself then Steer'd to the Eastward and Northward in hopes of falling in with some others of the fleet, but saw no Enemy except a few miserable Fishermen untill Saturday June the Seventh, on the Morning of which day we fell in with the *Fox* a British Frigate of 28 Guns Commanded by Capt: Patrick Fotheringham. She at first meant to Engage but thought 'twas best to try her Heels, which would have effectually saved her from me, but the *Hancock* coming up with her an Action ensued which did not end untill after we came up by which time the *Hancock* and the *Fox* were both very much damaged. The weather proving unfavourable for some time afterwards we were several days fitting the *Fox* and Capt. Manley his own Ship. I had sent my first Lieut't (Mr. Browne) on board the *Fox* the day she was taken but Captain Manley refused giving him the Command, and I was finally oblig'd to withdraw him for the sake of peace. I urged Capt: Manley to make the best of our way to Charlestown, South Carolina, there to join Capt: Biddle, fitt and Clean our Ships and then to Cruise for the West India Fleet untill towards the fall of the year by which time our own Coast would probably be clear and we might return without any risque compared with what must be now expected. He at first attended to my proposal but afterwards did as he pleas'd. The event will prove whither I judged right or not. In short we loiter'd away three weeks or a month before we sett our faces homeward by which time the Coast of New England from Cape Sable as far as New York was so cover'd with cruisers that there was no escaping them.

On Sunday the 6th of July being 15 leagues to the Eastward of Cape Sable we took a Sloop from Louisburgh bound for Halifax, but delaying some time with her we were chac'd towards evening by three Ships (we also being three). We did not make any efforts to avoid those Ships in Course of the night, on the Contrary Capt: Manley Tow'd the Sloop before spoken of untill next Morning, by which time one of the Ships ¹ was a head of us and tack'd upon us. The Second Ship ² which was a two decker was on our Lee Quarter about three Leagues from us, and the third Ship ³ about as far right a stern. Capt: Manley then thought proper to sett fire to the Sloop and quitted her and endeavour'd to make the best of our way, but the first Ship being up within Shott about noon we exchanged some Shott with her at a distance and then having spoke Capt: Manley we agreed to Tack and Engage her.

¹ British frigate *Flora*.

² British 44-gun ship *Rainbow*.

³ British brig *Victor*.

We immediately Tack'd and Capt: Manley begun the Action with his head to the Northward and the Enemy on the opposite Tack, we being close under the *Hancocks* Stern also fell in with the Enemy in our turn and exchanged about five broad Sides with her.

Her Shott was so well aim'd that some of them pass'd through our Ship under the wale so that we could not Tack upon the Enemy untill we had stop'd those Holes. This was however done in a few minutes, but not before the two deck Ship had gotten very near us. Unfortunately the *Fox* did not Tack at the same time we did, by which means the Enemy got between her and us, and she was oblig'd to pass under the fire of the first Ship above mention'd and the Fire of the two deck Ship also. Capt: Manley seeing that the *Fox* was beyond saving put about and stood to the Southward. The *Fox* bore away and run to the Eastward and we kept the Wind to the Northw'd. The two deck Ship then put about and follow'd the *Hancock*, leaving the *Fox* and me to the other two Ships. The *Fox* fled and defended herself bravely having also some advantage in point of Sailing. We were constrain'd to keep the Wind for our own Security being neither able to Run from nor fight such force as then appear'd to Leward. In a few hours we saw two more of the Enemy about two points on our weather bow — from these we were obliged to Tack to the Southward, the wind about WBS. After standing two hours to the Southw'd we espied another Ship bearing SW of us who appear'd to be in Chace towards us. I then hove about to the Northw'd again and stood on untill Nine oClock the Evening, the Chace coming down upon us very fast all the time, as soon as the Moon was down I tack'd and stood to the Southw'd and in less than an hour saw the Lights of the Chacing Ship standing athwart our Stern about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a Mile from us. On Tuesday Morning the 8th Current I saw five Sail of the Enemy to the Leward of me three on the Lee bow and two on the Lee Quarter, at the same time saw Cape Sable bearing NNE five leagues. The wind coming to the Southward I stood across the Bay of Funday detirmin'd to Shelter my self in the first port I could make, and get intelligence, which happen'd to be this river where I arriv'd on Thursday the 10th Instant. On my arrival here I found that the *Milford* Frigate ¹ had been in about fourteen days past and that she had penetrated up as far as we now are, Namely at Wichcassett point. There is scarce a day but one or two of the Enemys ships are seen off the Mouth of this river and the Coasting Vessells are very much distress'd. In this my present Situation I am much at a loss what to do — my Ships Company are so de-

¹ British.

minished by Manning the *Fox* and the Men otherwise lost since we Sailed from Boston, my Ship is very Fowl (not having been clean'd since Novem'r last) and besides that we cannot make her Sail fast, trim which way we will, the certainty of Meeting the Enemy in pairs along the Coast and only two ports capable of yielding us Shelter between this place and Boston Bay— all those Circumstances Considered, I think it prudent to stay for a few days to get some more Authentick information of the Numbers and strength of the Enemy in this Quarter, for according to the present accounts I think it is impossible for Single Ships to pass or repass, without being Sacrificed to their numerous fleet. We have certain accounts of twelve Sail of the Enemys Cruisers between Cape Ann and Cape Sable, sevrall of whom are large Ships. Our best accounts report two between this river and Casco Bay which is but 10 Leagues apart so that they are posted along shore at convenient distances to succour each other; I send you a return of the prisoners which I have brought here belonging to the *Fox* but for fear of Accidents have deliver'd them into the hands of the Committee of Safety to be forwarded towards Boston. Thither I shall repair as soon as possible from which place I promise my self the pleasure of Writing you more fully. I am Gentlemen with all possible respect, Your most humble Servant.

Ship *Boston* at Wichcassett
in Sheepgut River 16th July 1777.

TO THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS¹

To the Honourable the Council of the Massachusetts State.

GENTLEMEN

On my Arival at this place I did apply to the Committe for a guard to conduct Sixteen prisoners (Late of the *Fox* Frigate) to Boston. They set out from hence last Thursday, but I am perswaded this will be with you before them.

As I have three Lieutenants and fifty-three Men on board the *Fox*, who I fear is taken to Halifax, I beg as a particular favour that the Officers of the *Fox* may not be disposed of otherwise then to redeem mine. I think we have the first right and shall expect that they be kept safe untill my Arrival. Notwithstanding the expence of sending them so far by Land, I am perswaded my rea-

¹ Letter Book.

sons for setting them on shore will be Satisfactory. Your Most Obed't Serv't

Ship *Boston* at Wichcassett
July 21st 1777.

Mr. JOHN PERRY, 1st Lieutenant.
Mr. WILL'M BUDWORTH, 2d do.
Mr. PETER BURN, Master.

Mr. JAMES MALCOLM
Mr. JOHN FITZGERALD
Mr. GEORGE PARIS MONK
Mr. JAMES HARRISON, Captain's Clerke.

} Midshipmen.

WILLIAM JENNINGS
WILLIAM CHEESEMAN
JAMES LAMB
WILLIAM SACKVEILL
BARTH'W GEORGE
WILLIAM TUBBS
JAMES ROYALL
THOMAS PAINE
JOSEPH LYONS

} Seamen.

The above is a List of the Prisoners dispatch'd from Wichcassett,
July 17th, 1777.

TO THOMAS THOMPSON ¹

Capt: THOMPSON,

I have this moment receiv'd your welcome Letter of the 19th Inst: On my arrival here I would have wrote you a Narrative of our proceedings this last Cruise, but for want of an opportunity which could be trusted I refrain'd writing.

On Friday last I had some thoughts of stoping one who call'd himself Harris, he was in a Whale Boat which he said he had hired of a Butcher at Portsmo: by this Harris I wrote a Letter to you, thereby intending to deceive him in case he had been what I suspected, a Spy. Should you receive that Letter burn it, for I had no other Motive in writing it then those already mention'd.

To return now to Business I will tell you that I have spent a most painfull two Months on this Cruise. The General opinion which had prevail'd, that I was dissatisfied with being under Manley's Command, made me sett up a resolution to obey implicitly every one of his Commands, (as for Signals, I never could get any from him) to the utmost of my power. I did however endeavour to advise him now and then when in a good mood, and he often appear'd to attend to what I said; but the unstableness of his Temper led him rather to do as he pleas'd. Nevertheless I follow'd him as the Jackall does the Lyon, without Grumbling except in my Gizard.

¹ Letter Book. Captain Thompson's ship, the *Raleigh*, was fitting out at Portsmouth.

On Thursday 29th May we took a small Brigg from London Bound for New York. by this Brigg we found she was part of a Convoy which came out with the *Somersett* and *Mercury*. The next day, at day dawn we made four large Ships, the leading Ship I was well assured was the *Somersett*. I made the Signal to Speak with Manley that I might perswade him not to run directly into their Tract a head of them, they being to windward, in which position 'twould be very hard to discover their Force before they were very near us. No notice however was taken of my Signal. I then made Sail to overtake him which I did and told him that I was perswaded the headmost Ship was the *Somersett*. Our Prize was still in Company and sail'd dull, so that we fear'd we should loose her. Capt. Manley then told me to Stand to the Southward, the Wind being at ENE, the Prize and myself stood to the Southward and Manley Lay with his Courses up and small Sails handed untill the *Somersett* came within the reach of Grape Shott. Being then convinced of his Mistake he made all the Sail he could, but so Slowly did he get out of her way, That her Shott flew over him for an hour, by which Time I Tack'd to the Northw'd upon the Three Ships a Stern of her, and when I came within long Shott of them, the *Somersett* left chasing Manley and return'd to her Convoy; having Spoke with them, she wore and Chac'd me Six or Seven hours. At first she seem'd to Gain, but having alter'd the Trim of our Ship we then gain'd on her. A little before Night she return'd to her Convoy.

Manley had run so far to the Southw'd that we were not able to see him till Sunsett and did not fall in with him untill the next day. We then stood to the Northw'd and Eastward in hopes to fall in with some of the Scatter'd Ships of the aforesaid convoy, but the weather was so bad for ten or twelve days that we see nothing untill we got on the Bank. On Friday June the 6th we took a Brigg belonging to Dartmouth; her Capt: Manley order'd to be burnt for Country Sake. The next morning we fell in with the *Fox* about 7 O'clock forenoon. Captain Manley being a head exchanged two broadsides. She then made Sail and endeavour'd to gett off. She sail'd so fast that twas half after noon before Manley got along side of her, when a Spitefull Short Action Ensued for 45 Minutes before we came up. We did not fire untill within Pistol Shott and they struck the first broadside, but by some Mistake of their Marines or Topmen, they again Fired into our Ship after I had spoke to one of the Officers and desired him to throw a burning wadd overboard which had Lodged in the Miz'n Chains, there was no withholding our People and they return'd a few Shott

before I could stop them. As the *Hancock* and *Fox* had Engag'd with all their small kites out, they were both in the most helpless condition at the end of the Action. The *Fox* had pegg'd Mr. Manley's ribs so well that he had his pumps going, and both Ships were by the Lee, — with every Sail abroad.

I sent my first and 2 Lieutenant on board the *Fox*, order'd the first to Stay and the 2d to take the Captain of the *Fox* on board Capt: Manley as a Compliment to my Senior Officer. This was immediately done and the rest of the Officers with about 96 of the Men were brought on board me, a dozen of Fishermen came down to see the Sport as I had hoisted British Colours immediately after the Action ceas'd. Towards evening Capt: Manley came along side and order'd me to put all the common Men on board one of those fishing Vessells and Let them go about their Business. I endeavour'd to perswade him to come on board that I might tell him my thoughts on that Step. He said he could not enter on Acco't of Lameness but order'd me once more to sett about embarking them before Night. I accordingly put 85 of the *Fox's* Men on board one of the Fishing Vessells by Sunsett, the Sea and Wind rising after Night prevented puting any more on board and it coming bad weather before Morning they left us and made the best of their way for St. Johns. I immediately foresee the Consequence and the next day wrote to Capt: Manley praying him to make the best of our way to the Southw'd and proceed with all possible dispatch for South Carolina, — there 'twas probable we might not be watch'd by a Superior Force, but so sure as we offer'd to return home we were sure to be way laid by Ships from York and Rhode Island, who would be sent out as soon as the *Somersett* arrived, and were sure to be pursued by the Newfoundland and Halifax Ships. Capt: Manley at first acquiess'd, but in a few days alter'd his Mind and his Course, upon the whole we spent three weeks before we Sett our faces to the Westward, in all which time we saw Nothing but Spaniards and French Men, who run us to the Eastward a great way from the place we had first met with the *Fox*.

We at last sett out for home, and keeping well to the Northward we made the High Land of Portmuttoon [Port Matoun]. On Sunday Morning the 6th Instant about 8 o Clock A.M. Capt: Manley brought too an old Sloop, Coal Loaded from Cape Britain. We Lost severall hours dallying with the Sloop untill the Morning breeze which was at N was Spent. He then took her in Tow and stood to the Southw'd and Westward. About 4 o'Clock that afternoon we Saw three Sail astern of us who appear'd to be in chace of

us. Far from taking notice of the Signal made by the *Fox* who was then astern, Capt: Manley Tow'd the Sloop all Night and we to keep astern had our Miz'n Topsail to the Mast half the Night. When day come on we see the headmost Ship¹ forward of our Lee Catthead, the Second Ship² (a two decker) on our Lee Quarter and the third Ship³ right a stern.

The headmost Ship, Tack'd upon us and pass'd under our Lee within Gun Shott, at 8 o Clock, as soon as she had our weak, She Tack'd after us, we being the Sternmost Ship Exchanged some Shott with her; about noon I got within hail of Capt: Manley, and he proposed Tack'g to Engage this Ship before the others came up. We did so immediately and both Exchanged a few broad Sides with her as she pass'd. The *Fox* did not Tack with us which Exposed her to this Ships Fire. She then attempted to Tack but Missing Stays was Obligated to wear which brought her under the Lee of the first Ship and just to Windward of the two decker. We then had all our heads to the Northw'd, the Wind at WBS. Manley being the Weathermost Ship he Tack'd and stood to the Southward. The Large Ship Tack'd after him. The *Fox* bore away and Run to the Eastward and I kept the Wind to the Northw'd. At 4 P M we discover'd two Square lofty Vessells to the Northw'd of us standing our way. We then put about and stood to the Southward for one or two hours, when we made another right to Windward coming down with all the Sail she could make. From this one we also Tack'd and stood on to the Northw'd untill the Moon was down. We then hove about to the Southw'd and in less than an hour saw her lights crossing our Weak right astern about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a Mile. Next Morning we had five Sail and the Land of Cape Sable in Sight; the Wind coming to the Southw'd we hauled across the Bay of Funday and thick weather coming on that Night and next day, we see no more of them Except one at 2 A M Wednesday Morning. We were within hail of her before we discover'd her, but She being on one Tack and we on the other we Saw her Top light time enough to avoid her. We heard a Signal Gun of hers about two hours before.

Now to come to our own Affairs, the State of my Ship is nearly as follows, Sixty Men short of what I brought out, the Scurvy taking every day, my Vessells Bottom very fowl.

I intend to take the first good opportunity of running along shore as far as Casco Bay, or if the weather be favourable, as far as Portsmouth where I will certainly put in if I can. We have seen none of the Enemys Ships from the Mouth of this river this five

¹ *Flora*.² *Rainbow*.³ *Victor*.

days but as long as the wind Continues Southerly I cannot pretend to get out. If Capt: Hinman¹ and you are able to join Company at Portsmouth and there be a Continuation of South'y Winds, should you stretch down as far as Casco, you may find me there. Should I be chaced by a Superior Force any where near Portsmouth I will come as near you as I can, in which case should the Wind be fowl for me to fetch in, perhaps you may be able to come out to my Assistance.

As to your Cruising Singly, or even with two of our Ships, there is a great risque — the Enemys Cruisers are so numerous, and most of them Stout Ships so that light Ships stand little or no chance. May God bless and prosper you is the Prayer of your Friend and Obedient Servant,

H. McM.

P.S. I shall attend to the Continental Signals sent to Capt: Hinman from Philadelphia in case of our Meeting.

Wichcassett 21st July 1777.

My Compliments to Mrs. Thompson.

TO HIS WIFE²

DEAR MARY:— I wrote you soon as I arived here, but know not whither you have received it. I sent by way of Salem. This will acquaint you with my health. I intend to see you as soon as possible.

I have sent 16 prisoners by Land to Boston, seven of whom were officers of The Frigate *Fox*.

I have wrote the Council that those Gentlemen may be detained until my Arivall That with them I may redeem my Own officers, who I fear are taken and carried to Halifax. You must tell My Friend William, That he must make a point of obtaining one of them to redeem his Son Robert who with Mr. Gross, Mr. Harris, Mr. Knowles and Mr. Millen together with 53 men I put on board that Ship to help man her. My Love and Blessing remain with you and the Children. Your Husband,

HECTOR McNEILL.

The Doctor sends his Compliments.

Ship *Boston* 21st July at Wichcassett.

Addressed: Capt. Hector McNeill, Milk Street, Boston. fav-[ore]d by Mr. Ward. Falmouth, July 23.

¹ Commanding the Continental ship *Alfred*.

² From the Gray Papers.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF FALMOUTH ¹Ship *Boston* 25th July 1777.

GENTLEMEN: I am inform'd that two of the Prisoners late belonging to the *Fox* which I forwarded here by Land from Wichcassett last week have been Negligently left behind in this place.

I cannot help Expressing my astonishment on this Occasion at the conduct of those Gentlemen who had the care of the Prisoners.

Were our poor Countrymen who unfortunately fall into the hands of the Enemy no better guarded or let run at loose in this manner we might entertain some hopes of their being able to find their way once more to their own home, but alas the contrary is too well known. Many of them have been constrain'd to take arms against their Country, all who refuse so to do have been close confin'd and treated with such cruelty as would Shock the heart of a Barbarian untill they can be redeem'd by Exchange, suffer they must. Is it not then great cruelty in us to Neglect redeeming our own people knowing full well what hard measure they have while in the hands of the foe, what mistaken pitty that is which only extends to our Enemys when they fall into our hands, and neglects our own people who meet such cruel Treatment among them. This is but poor encouragement for Men to enter into the Service of their Country, who tho they may take and convey home Prisoners enough to redeem themselves in case of their being taken, yet have only this Melancholy reflection for their Comfort, Namely That their indolent, faithless Countrymen, suffer such to Slip through their fingers, while they poor Souls are sure to perish in a Prison unless they be redeem'd.

I therefore call on you Gentlemen as the Active guardians of your Country and your brethren in Captivity, requesting that you would cause those Prisoners to be apprehended and deliver'd again into my Care, or sent under a proper Guard to Boston. I am Gentlemen Your most Obed't Servant

H. McN.

To the Gentlemen of the Committe of Safety for the Town of Falmouth.

¹ Letter Book.

TO THE MARINE COMMITTEE¹

FALMOUTH CASCO BAY 4th Aug't 1777

GENTLEMEN,

Above you have copy of my last Letter dated at Wichcasset 16th ulto., since which I arrived with the *Boston* at this place, but when I shall reach Boston, or even Portsmouth, is uncertain.

The Enemy keep such a look out and are so Numerous that 'tis no easy matter to Slip throw among them.

Three Nights ago we had four Sail of their Frigates off this Harbours mouth in full sight, and by the letter now in my hand from the committee of Safety at Newb'y Port, it appears that four Ships and a Brigg are Stationed in Ipswich Bay, besides those Stationed in Boston Bay.

Thick weather for a day or two has hid them from us, but in clear weather they are allway near in with the Land.

They seem now to be posted in three divisions, within the distance of forty leagues Coastwise, one division off Cape Elizabeth and a Little to the east'd of it, the Second off Portsmouth tending South'y towards Cape Ann, the Third division between Cape Ann and Cape Cod.

Notwithstanding all this I hope by the Blessing of God upon our care and good conduct to Save the *Boston* for a More fortunate cruise then has been our last.

There are so many different reports circulated concerning Capt. Manley, That I know not what to write at this time. I am still in hopes, that he has Escaped the Enemy and gone to South Carolina. Happy had it been for himself and all concerned, if he had taken so much of my advice the day after we took the *Fox*, but alas his Obstanicey and want of reflection at that period, will for ever furnish him with matter for repentance.

When I endeavoured to persuade him to go to South Carolina, my reasonings were grounded on the following circumstances —

In the first place, the Enemy were well Acquainted with the time of our Sailing from Boston and with the length of our intended Cruise (the latter might be known by the quantity of provisions taken in) which was only for Six or Eight weeks.

2dly. Our falling in with the *Sumersett* in the Tract for New York on the ninth day after we sail'd This Ship's arrivall at that place would be the means of heastning out crusiers after us, either from York or Rhode Island.

3dly. The Exceeding bad pollicy he had been guilty of in turn-

¹ Letter Book.

ing away upw'ds of one hundred men lately belonging to the *Fox* within Six hours after She was taken. Those men were put on board some fishing Vessells, and made the best of their way for St. Johns Harbour which was then within 24 hours Sail'g of us. At the Harbour of St. Johns Lay Admiral Montague with the *Romney* and some other Ships of war, and to me it appeared probable that he would use his Endeavours to recover the *Fox*, by sending out as many Ships in quest of us as he could muster. Those Ships of his might be joined by Others from Halifax, so that with the help of the Ships already spoken of from N. York and Rhode Island, a chain of cruisers might be form'd between Cape Sable, and Nantucket Shoals, which 'twould be difficult to pass.

After considering all these things I was totally Against returning home by the way we went out. Therefore I earnestly requested that we might immediately make the best of our way for South Carolina, there refitt and clean our Ships, and if Capt. Biddle could be ready to come out with us so much the better. With four Ships like ours, we might do much Service to our Country and ourselves.

Capt. Manley Expressed much willingness to follow this plan at first, when I made him Acquainted with it by my Letter of the ninth of June last, but in a day or two he changed his mind, and his course, and notwithstanding all the remonstrances I could make he continued cruising three weeks or upwards to no purpose, Except that of going farther from home — thereby giveing the Enemy more time to take the proper steps for intercepting us, on our return.

Part of the Consequences (namely the Loss of the *Fox*) you are but too well acquainted with by this time. What Capt. Manleys fate or mine will be, is not altogether yet decided. May God strengthen the Hands of the Congress and save our Country by his Mighty Power, joined with their honest Endeavours, for Sure I am that they have but indifferent prospects from the abillity of many of us Employ'd under them.

I am Gentlemen with Sincereley your Most Obed't Servant

HECTOR MCNEILL.

To the Hon'ble the Marine Committee
of Congress at Philadelphia.

TO JOHN LANGDON¹

FALMOUTH 5th Aug't 1777

SIR,

I did my self the pleasure of writing you soon after I arived at Sheepscott river, praying the favour of you to forward my Letter to the Marine committee which I had left open for your particular Satisfaction. At that time I was in hopes of Seeing you long before this but the precarious State of a Single Ship in these times, and the want of a good Oppertunity has kept me at so great a distance. We have some Vessells in here now who have been drove in by three or four Large Ships who seem to be Station'd about the mouth of this Bay; three evenings ago we see them from the forts. When I shall be able to Slip by them I know not. Now My good Sir as my provisions are Nearly out and there appears no prospect of a Supply in or near this place, This is to request the favour of you to Save us from perishing for want of Provisions or being obliged to run a certain risque of Loosing the Ship rather then to Starve here. The Chance of getting any thing of provision kind from Boston at present must be much more uncertain then from Portsmouth. I pray you therefore that you would Send me down, three weeks Bread and flesh, which with the Little I have left will I hope be Sufficient to bring us to Portsmouth. Let it be sent in some small Vessell with some Faithful person and a good pilot so that she may run into aney hole for Safety.

I am Sir with great respect your Most Obed't Serv't

HECTOR MCNEILL.

To John Langdon, Esq'r
Continental Agent at Portsmouth.

TO JOHN BROWNE¹

SIR

Inclosed you have an open Arrest for Capt: Richard Palmes,² you will please to take a Copy of it and keep it by you untill a future day, the Original which I have Sign'd, you will be pleas'd to put into his hands as soon as possible.

Yours

HECTOR MCNEILL

Commander of the *Boston* Ship of War.

Sunday 6 o Clock afternoon
10th day of August at Sea.

TO LIEUT. JNO. BROWNE of the said Ship.

¹ Letter Book.² Captain of marines.

TO RICHARD PALMES¹

SIR

Your unofficer like behaviour and repeated breach of my Orders, obliges me to confine you to your birth untill it may be in my power to bring you to a Court Martial, where I hope you will have justice done. At your Perril break your Arrest, in which case I shall treat you as you deserve. Yours

HECTOR MCNEILL.

Ship *Boston* at Sea this 10th day of
August 1777, 6 o Clock afternoon.

SIR¹

You may thank your own folly and impertinence for what has now befallen you. I dispise your insinuations of Cruelty, as indeed I do Every thing Else you can say of me consistent with truth. You may go to the house of Office as often as Nature calls, provided you return immediately to your berth and keep your Tounge Still as you pass and repass. This you will attend to at your Perril.

HECTOR MCNEILL.

Monday 11 o Clock Aug't 11th 1777.

TO CAPT. PALMES.

Dr. Mr. John Billard in a/c with Hector McNeill Esq'r.¹ *Cr.*

May 20 To 1 Bed	1. 4. 0	By his Wages from
June 9 To 3 Shirts24/	3.12. -	14th May 1777 to
To 2 pair Worst'd Hose		14th August 1777 is 3
	12/	Months @ 12 Dollars
22d To Cash	11. 3	per Month ..£10.16.-
Aug'st 14 To Ball'ce due J Bill-		
ard	4. 4. 9	

£10.16. -

14 To Cash p'd more
than the above
Ballance

5. 3

Ship *Boston* August
14th 1777.
Errors Excepted.

£11. 1. 3

¹ Letter Book.

TO THE MARINE COMMITTEE¹

BOSTON Aug't 25th 1777

To the Hon'ble Marine Committee at Philadelphia.

GENTLEMEN

My last of the 4th instant from Falmouth as also copy of my former Letter from Sheepscott river dated the 16th ulto. I hope you have received before now.

This comes to Acquaint you with my Arival at Boston on Saturday last, haveing Stop'd a few days at Portsmouth on my way from Falmouth. it will also inform you of the State the Ship is in at present, and my thoughts of what is Necessary to be done to Equip her for the Sea.

As it is my duty to Acquaint you with the property, and Trim of the Ship I command so I hope you will have patience with me untill I tell you all that I have been Able to Observe concerning either.

In the first place I think something ought to be done in the Standing of her masts, to try if it may not have a good Effect on her Sailing; her bottom is allow'd to be as fine as any thing of the kind will admitt of. We have alter'd her Trim frequently and find great difference in her going, but yet we never have been able to make her go as fast as some other Ships we have fallen in with. One great hope I have that she is cappable of Sailing fast is That She is the most Ticklish Ship to keep in trim that ever I was acquainted with, for I have repeatedly found that the unequal Expence of one days Provisions and water would put her out of Trim. From this circumstance I am Persuaded that She will One day Sail fast if her Trim can be discover'd. One great disadvantage we have had in Trimming her, is that we had little or none pigg Ballast wherewith to make the Experiment, consequently when we have been Obliged to alter, the men and Guns was our only resource, both of which bring great inconveniencys, the one being as defecult to keep Still in the place you want them, as the other is to transport fore and aft.

2dly. Such a quantity of Gravel Ballast as we are Obliged to cary to Stiffen the Ship, takes up a great deal of our room (of which there is but too Little at best) then being mixd in with the water Casks fore and aft, it composes such a dead Mass that a Ship thus ballast[ed] feels her self no more then an Island, and as it Layes so much higher then Pigg Ballast the weight deepens a Ship more then it Stiffens her for carying Sail, con-

¹ Letter Book.

sequently when her body is in the water like a Loaded Vessel, 'tis not possible for her to Sail so fast. This I have frequently found by our Ship, her being commonly so deep That when ever we have press'd her with Sail She has gone less Swift then before.

To go best close haul'd she ought to be on an even keel That is 14 feet 3 inches forw'r and aft. To go Large, or afore the wind, She must be 10 or 12 inches deeper aft then forward, and there is not a good property a Ship can have (Except room within, and Speed of foot) but this Ship may boast of. When brought to her courses upon a wind She proved a much more weatherly Ship then the *Hancock*, but in fine weather the *Hancock* bore the bill.

She has been now Nine Months off the Ground, Six of which pass'd before we saild from Nantasket. How can it be Expected that the finest bottoms will sail foul equal to clean Ships. For the future then let me intreate you Gentlemen to Order Matters so that your Ships may have an equall chance with those they are Obliged to face. Dont suffer them to go out foul nor Cruize long in any particular Station Especially in this our State of infancy when we neither know what our Ships can do nor have expert men to mannage them.

When the Marine Board meets here, I shall consult them concerning many things Necessary with which I would not take up your time at present. Shall now proceed to mention some things which respect my self more particularly.

In my former Letters I gave you the Outlines of our Late Cruize, without entering into a circumstantial Account, or giving my Opinion of men and things, with that freedom I now propose to indulge my self in this.

I take the Liberty to assure you, That when I entered into the Continental Service I had not one Single thought whither I should be placed the third or the Thirteenth upon the List, my ambition was fully satisfied when I was favoured with a Commission placing me where I now am, and Altho I did then forsee that one day or other I might possibly fall under the Command of one man, whose Ability I had reason to doubt, yet I was determined that happen whensoever it might I would Obey and follow his instructions with all that Zeal which becomes a faithful Servant to the Publick, who will never neglect or loose Sight of his duty for any private veiw whatever.

With these Sentiments I enter'd into the Service and have constantly made them my practice ever since. My conduct on our late cruize under the Command of Capt. Manley will Abundantly

prove the truth of what I here advance, for never did a Pilotfish follow a Sharke, or a Jackall follow a Lion, with more Assiduity and Complisance then I follow'd him at Sea for Six or Seven weeks (chiefly in bad weather Latitudes), and that without any regular System of Signals, or instructions for my direction dureing which time he led me into severall Scrapes by his misconduct, and at last left me in one to shift for my self.

I hold it criminal to asperse the character of any man, much more the Absent, and in some cases Scarcely Justifiable to Speak all the Truth, for which reasons were I not under a Necessity I should now say very little of Capt. Manley, but inasmuch as I find my self involved in a chain of difficultys by his blunders and misconduct, I must in justice to my self say, That he is totally unequal to the Command with which he has been intrusted, he being ignorant, Obstinate, Overbearing and Tyranical beyound discription, a man under whose command none can live with pleasure but such creatures as himself, and those also must be of his own makeing. Such is that Fellow of yesterday, Mr. Stephen Hill, whom he promoted over all Other Officers' heads to Command the *Fox*, who by his ignorance and Misconduct lost her at last, for had he Tack'd when Capt. Manley and my self Tack'd on the Enemy he might have weather'd them whilst we were engaged with the *Flora*, or had he kept the wind with me even after Manley left us, and Tack'd to the South'd from us, he might have Escaped, but to bear away, and run to Leward with all the Sail he could crou'd when a Third Ship of the Enemy was then in Sight to Lewward discovered the most Stupid ignorance in Nature.

All these things will Abundantly appear when ever a court martial happens, which God Grant may be soon.

I have been curst with another composition of the Fool and Knave, I mean a certain Mr. Palmes who had a Commission as Capt. of Marines on board the *Boston*, which Commission he has distroy'd by casting it into the fire. His disobedience to orders and frothy foolish conduct Obliged me to lay him under an arrest, but as there is no means here of bringing him to a Court martial I shall leave it to you how to deal with him. In the mean time I shall take Notice of him another way.

I am Gentlemen with great respect your most Obed't Servant,

HECTOR McNEILL.

To the Honourable the Marine Committee
of the Hon'ble the Continental Congress,
at Philadelphia.

TO THE NAVY BOARD, EASTERN DISTRICT ¹

GENTLEMEN

Your favour of the 2nd I receiv'd yesterday evening to which I shall pay Strict attention.

Herewith I lay before you Copys of my different Letters since my return from a Cruise to The Hon'ble The Marine Committee at Philadelphia in the 3rd and last of which you will find the State and properties of the Ship *Boston* under my command, a Return of her Officers and Men I will furnish you with very Soon.

An Indent also for such things as are absolutely Necessary, shall be laid before you as soon as I can examine the remaining Stores.

Her Dimentions and Burthen I never have been able to come at my self from either Agents, Builders, or Mastmakers, nevertheless I will make it my Business to Measure the Ship whenever an opportunity offers.

The Ship *Boston* mounts

Cannon	Swivels
5 of 12 Pounders	} 16
19 of 9 do.	
2 of 6 do.	
4 of 4 do.	

There are a great number whose times with the Ship are Expired, those Men expect their Wages and discharge incessantly. where am I to find Money to pay them.

What Encouragement is to be given Men who may have an Inclination to enter for the Ship and how Long time are they to be Engaged for.

What provision is to be made for the Familys of the Men we have Lost in the *Fox*.

How are the relatives of the few Slain to apply for their Bountys.

What Stoppages are there to be allow'd on the Men for Venerials, for Barber and for Chaplains.

What provision is there to be made for the Officers who live on board the Ship, as to their eatting and drinking.

These are questions which I hope you will be kind Enough to Answer Speedily as the impatience of the Multitude requires an immediate application.

¹ Letter Book.

As to the time t'will take to refitt the Ship for a Cruise, was it possible to know when she would be Man'd, I might easily tell you, but I am of opinion that the Ships Bottom should be the last thing Medled with, her Stores of all kinds ought to be ready and her Provisions ready so that immediately after Cleaning she should have nothing else to do but Take them in and proceed to Sea. I am Gentlemen Your humble Servant.

Boston 4th Sept. 1777.

To The Hon'ble The Navy Board appointed by Congress
for the Eastern district at their Office in Boston.

TO JOHN BROWNE¹

SIR

You are hereby required and directed to Muster the Ships Company Tomorrow Morning by Seven o Clock.

When Muster'd you are to place Centinels so as to keep them from dispersing, then you are to unrigg the Fore Topmast and put it on Shore, in like manner the Main and Mizzen Topmasts taking care to have the rigging Tally'd so that no mistakes may happen. The Jebboom you will also have in and ashore, the utmost dispatch must be made to prepare the Ship for Sea. Your humble Servant.

Boston 5th Sept'r 6 o Clock P M.

To Lieut. John Browne of the *Boston* Frigate.

TO THE NAVY BOARD, EASTERN DISTRICT¹

BOSTON 6th Sept'r 1777

GENTLEMEN

Your Letter of yesterday I rec'd and shall Observe your Orders therein Contain'd.

As ther are Severall things wanting to fitt the Ship for Sea, I have Set down at the foot, a few of the most Material Articles that you may have time to provide them.

Should also take it as a favour, That you would be pleased to Order a Survey on the Ships Standing rigging, as we are of opinion that it is not Sufficient for a winters cruize.

It will be Likewise Necessary for you to determine how I am

¹ Letter Book.

to proceede in fitting the Ship, That is whither the work will depend wholly on our own People without any farther encourage't then their monthly wages. I am Gentlemen, Yours.

2 New Cables of 16½ inch 120 fatho. each.

3 New Steering sails

3 New Top sails

1 Jebb

3 New Top Gall't Sails

50 Tons of Pigg Ballast.

GENTLEMEN ¹

In my last Letter to the Hon'ble Marine Committe dated 25th Ultio. you may remember that I have mention'd Capt: Palmes, his being under Arrest. The Solicitations of the other Officers on his behalf prevail'd with me to grant him all the Liberty he desired. Had he resumed his duty and behaved properly since his Enlargement, I might have possibly overlook'd all that was past, but inasmuch as he has again misbehaved and appears incouragable, 'tis my duty to insist on his being brought to Tryal as soon as possible. The crimes I have to accuse him with are misaplication of the Ships Stores, Neglect of duty, disobedience of orders, and attempts to Excite Murmuring and Mutiny among the Ships Company. You will therefore be pleased to give orders that a Competent number of Officers be Collected together at this place as soon as may be to hear and determine on this Matter.

Another request I have to make is that when those Gentlemen are Collected here for the purposes aforesaid a number of Sea officers only shall be Ordered to form themselves into a Court of Enquiry to hear and Examine Evidencies such as can be found Capable of giving information of the State of things on the 6th, 7th, and 8th days of July last in the little Squadron Command'd by Capt. John Manley.

To the Intent that Facts may be Established by the Testimonies of numbers who where then present on board the Boston.

I am Gentlemen, Your most Obed't Serv't.

Boston 9th Sep'r 1777.

To the Hon'ble Gentlemen
of the Navy Board at Boston.

¹ Letter Book.

TO HORATIO GATES ¹

BOSTON 15th Sept'r 1777

To His Excellency Major Gen'l Gates.

SIR

A certain Benj'a Hall Tappin did inlist for three years in Capt. Jabez Lane's company in Colonel Nixon's regiment haveing had repeated promises that he should be appointed a Serg't.

With these assurances he went into the country to recruite, and inlisted four men at one time, three at another time, and brought them to Boston, where meeting a certain Mr. Buckminster, then Adjutant to Nixons Regiment, Tappin was order'd to march as a private. His Captain being absent, Tappin refused to march untill he was reimbursed forty dollars of his own money which he had laid out for the Support and mentainance of the Seven men he had inlisted for the reg't, also insisted on the promises he had of being appointed a Serjant.

A Misunderstanding arose between himself and the Adjutant, so that he (Tappin) left him and enter'd on board the Continental Ship under my command, concluding with himself That provided he continued in the Continental Service, and return'd the Bounty he Should do no wrong.

As this man proved an Active trusty Seaman, he soon Attracted my attention, so that makeing my self acquainted with his past life I came to the knowledge of the foregoing circumstances, which I found bore verely heavy on his mind during the Cruize.

On our return to this place I waited on Gen'l Heath praying him to give me up this one man as I had already given up a great number of Landmen who had first inlisted with me, and immediately afterwards enter'd into the army. This I have done repeatedly and there is scarcely a week passes but I have an opportunity of doing the like.

The Principall I go upon is, That if an able bodied Landman inlists for One year on board my Ship, and in one week after chooses to enter into the Army for three years, I will consent that he shall goe because I think it is of more importance to the Service to have a man for three years in the Army, then it can possibly be to have the same man for Only one year on board of my Ship. With these Sentiments it has been often in my power to help officers to men, and it very seldom happens that I have Occasion to ask such favours of the Gentlemen in the Land Service.

¹ Letter Book.

General Heaths Answer was, That Colnel Nixons Regiment was now in your department; That nothing could be done for me, or my man in this case but by your Excellencys particular directions, and desired me to Lay a State of the matter before you by Letter, which I have faithfully represented to the best of my knowledge.

You will be pleased to consider that this man has been bred to the Sea, has been Mate of a Vessell in the Merchants Service, and has freinds who are able to give him good Employ as soon as the War is over, the Soldiers Life is totally disagreeable to him, and if ever he does well 'twill be in that proffession to which he has Serv'd his youth, he is content to Stay in the Continental Service by Sea and is worth prefferment.

Will your Excellency be pleased to let me keep this man, on my returning the Bounty, or must I give a Landman in his room, or what Else will you be pleased to have done with him.

Your former Friendship for me has encouraged me to hope that you will not refuse me this favour. I will therefore keep him untill your Excellencys pleasure concerning him be known, which I humbly pray may be by return of the post.

May God preserve your precious Life and Crowne you with health, Success and Victory, is the ardent wish of your Most obed't Serv't

HECTOR MCNEILL.

TO THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS¹

To the Honourable Board of Council of the Massachusetts State.
GENTLEMEN

I understand that your Hon'ble Board intend to dispatch a Flagg of Truce to Halifax. Suffer me the Liberty to Send you a List of my Officers, and men who are now prisoners there, Humbley praying that you would be pleased to take Such Steps as will Set them at Liberty as soon as possible, more Espacially such a number of those first on the List, as may be an Equivalent for the officers, and men, of the *Fox*, now prisoners here. You will be pleased to Consider that many of my men have familys here in a Suffering Situation, which of Necessity will grow greater from their Absences.

I am Gentlemen with due Respect y'r Most Obed't Servant.

Boston 16th Sept'r 1777.

¹ Letter Book.

TO JOHN BRADFORD ¹

SIR

I have frequently apply'd at your Office for two peices broad white Bunting, and a piece of narrow also, this is to renew that demand as at present the Ship has no Colours to hoist. It will be necessary for you to provide Pitch, Tarr and Turpentine with Sulphur etc. and two Barrells of Tallow for the Ships use; we have not Tarr enough to Tarr the Yards which is much wanting. Yours

HECTOR MCNEILL.

Ship *Boston* Octo'r 1st 1777.

TO JOHN BROWNE

SIR

You may remember I told you on Tuesday last, That I had heard from Severall hands, That you had often said you did not intend going to Sea in the Ship *Boston*. When I put the matter to you, the answer you made me was not satisfactory.

I do therefore insist on a positive Answer in writing whither you intend to Stand by the Ship the next Cruize, Or whither you intend to quit her before she goes to Sea. Your answer in writing will instantly determine me what to do. I am Sir Your humble Servant

HECTOR MCNEILL.

Ship *Boston* Octo'r 3d 1777.

To Lt. Jno. Browne of the *Boston*.

TO ROBERT PIERPONT ²

SIR

Captain John Johnston, now a Prisoner here, to my certain knowledge did in the year 1775 bring out a Cargo of Goods, and a Gang of Carpenters to Quebec there intending to build a new Ship; in Septem^r that same year I found him with his new Ship in some forwardness, when the news arriv'd of the Garrison of S^t Johns being beseiged and Government began to put themselves in a State of defence. They immediately took all Capt.

¹ Letter Book. John Bradford, Continental Agent at Boston.

² Mass. Archives, CLXXXIII. 205.

Johnstons hands off the new Ship and insisted on himself entering into the Artillery who were chiefly composed of Masters, Mates, &c. belonging to the Merchant Ships there detained. Sooner than comply, Capt. Johnston left his new Ship, his Cargo, and all, and took passage for England, as also did all his People, one only excepted and he was killed in the Storm of y^e 31st Decem^r when Gen^l Montgomery fell. Capt. Johnston return'd last year a passenger to Quebec bringing with him Sails and rigging for his new Ship, but on his arrival he found that she had been taken to peices and her frame carried up to Lake Champlain. He return'd to Britain and was now on his way to New York in the Merchant Service.

Now this poor Man has a family and it is notorious that he has Kept himself as much out of Action as possible. May it not be hoped that he be not long detain'd here but sent to N. York, at which place he has some Bussiness to Transact; in the mean time may he be indulged with leave to stay on Shore at Lodgings here untill the Flagg of Truce be ready to depart. I am Sir with all possible Esteem Your most humble Servant

HECTOR MCNEILL.

Boston 6th Octo^r 1777

[Addressed] To M^r Robert Pierpont
Commissary of Prisoners
Present.

TO LAWRENCE FURLONG ¹

Your Letter of yesterday was handed me by Mr. Gregg. In answer to which I tell you that (my orders of the 17th Sep^r last which are placarded on the bulk head in common view) those orders have met with the approbation of the Navy Board, and I expect that you and every other Officer whose duty it is to keep Journals will comply with them.

The misfortune has been that yourself and many others of the late Officers of the *Boston* fancied yourselves totally independent of me — consequently not accountable. The course of your whole conduct the last Cruise and since our arrival, proves this, but I am not that blockhead of yesterday you vainly imagine. I will have you and all Men know that as Officers under my Command you are accountable to me for your Conduct and without my

¹ Letter Book.

approbation no Man has a right to Wages or Prize Money — as to paying the Wages to Officers and Men, I have done it too Long for mine own advantage. Whenever the Hon'ble Congress appoints a pay Officer it will take a great deal of trouble off my hands.

As to your reference to the 9th Article of the Masters instructions, it touches me not, the order I gave the 17th I had a right to give, and none but fools would have refused to comply with them.

Yours

HECTOR McNEILL.

Boston 7th Octo'r 1777.

TO JOHN BROWNE¹

SIR

On the 3d instant I put the above Letter into your hand, to which I desired you would give a positive answer immediately.

This you have Neglected to do, — in any Other way then by Absenting yourself from the Ship, and Neglecting your duty.

From this circumstance and many others, together with the totall Neglect and contempt with which you have treated my Orders of every kind for some time past, I do conclude, That you Neither intend going in the Ship yourself nor wish that others should go.

I shall therefore write to the Hon'ble Congress to Supply your place with some person who may be better disposed to cary on the Ships duty then you have been.

In the mean time I think it my duty to Suspend you untill the pleasure of Congress be known. You are Therefore hereby Suspended from the Office of Lieutenant of the Ship *Boston* in the Service of the united States of America, and are hereby also strictly forbidden any farther Exercise of Authourity as an Officer on board the Said Ship or any thing belonging to the Same from the day of the date hereof.

Given on Board the *Boston* Ship of War in the Harbour of Boston this 9th day of October 1777.

To Mr. John Browne.

¹ Letter Book.

TO THE MARINE COMMITTEE¹Ship *Boston* at Boston 9th Oct'r 1777

To the Hon'ble the Marine Committe of the Continental Congress.

GENTLEMEN

Your Orders of the Sixth ultimo I have rec'd and shall do my outmost to Execute them with all possible dispatch. We have Shifted our Standing rigging on the Main and Fore Masts since our arival and are well on with evrey other kind of repair of which the Ship stood in need, and I prepose cleaning her Bottom the Next full Moon, as the tides will then fully answer to Lay the Ship ashore. Our main dificalty will be to procure hands, as we are daily robb'd of our men by both privatiers, and merchant men; the Extravigant wages given by the Latter, and the great Encouragements given by the former, together with some mismanagement amongst our selves has left us a thin Ship. Nevertheless I hope to get to Sea before the cold weather sets in.

In my letter of the 25th of August I did inform you that Capt. Palmes of our Marines was under Arrest, and that I could not see how he could be brought to a Court martial as we were only a Single Ship in this Port.

As Soon as the Navy Board mett here I did apply to them by Letter of the 9th of Sept'r last requesting that they would call a Suffeicent number of Officers from Providence to Sit on that court martial, Also to hold a Court of Enquirey on our proceedings the Last cruize, That all possible Evidence might be collected from our Ships company (before they Scattered) concerning the Loss of the *Hancock* and the *Fox*.

I am now told that the Expedition in Contemplation Against Rhode Island, is the Cause why those officers have not been Ordered here as I requested.

This happens a Little unlucky at present inasmuch as an Example of justice is wanting at this time on persons who commit such crimes as Capt. Palmes Stands Charged with — That other men may see and refraine in time from such misdeeds. His crime is Neglect of duty, Misapplication of the Ships Stores, disobedience of Orders, and frequent attempts to raise discontent and Mutiny among the Ships Company. If either of these crimes be proved against him, I flatter my self that the Hon'ble Congress will never give him another Commission to Cast into the fire as he did that with which they Once honoured him.

¹ Letter Book.

In Consequence of some altrication between Mr. Browne the first Lt. and Some of the people on board I have been led to Examine narrowly into his Conduct, which I find so reprehensible that I have this day Suspended him untill the pleasure of Congress be known.

I have charged him with Neglect of duty and a Designe of detaining the Ship in Port all winter by persuaideing some and threatning Others to quit the Ship, so that he may live ashore here in ease and idleness, some of his predominate vices.

Our 2d Lt. Mr. Simon Gross, is now a prisoner at Halifax, our third Lt., Mr. Hazekiah Welch, is here, and is determined to abide by the Ship. Mr. William Faris, a young man who has served as a Mate and Midshipman on board, is both a Seaman and a Gentleman. Him I have appointed to act as a Lieutenant untill it shall please the Hon'ble Congress to Confirm, or Disapprove, of my choice. The former I shall look on as a favour; the Latter will not make me uneasy.

A Verey Singular instance has turn'd up here which I cannot forbear takeing notice of. When the Agents advertized in the publick prints that the *Bostons* Prize Money was to be paid I published the following order on board the Ship which I caused to be placarded in the most publick place of the Ship —

The Officers, viz. Mates and Midshipmen of the Ship *Boston*, are to produce fair Copys of their Journals, Signed by their own hands, in order to intitle them to their wages and prize money for the Said Ship.

Ship *Boston* 17th Sept'r 1777.

H: McN.

The above order gave offence to Severall of our officers, and they refused to give in their Journals, on which I stop'd the payment of their prize Money. As for Mr. Palmes, 'tho I Expected no Journal of him, yet as he was under Arrest I thought proper to detain his, untill his fate was decided by a Courtmartial.

In this case those Gentlemen found themselves a Little Embarras'd and tho they would not acknowledge my authority over them So much as to render copy of their Journals, yet they found that I had Stop'd payment of their prize money untill they should Comply with that Order.

Messrs. Vernon and Deshon of the Na[v]y Board being at this time up at Providence, Mr. Palmes went thither and Sollicited an

order to Obtain the Prize money for himself, Mr. Browne and Mr. Furlong, the Master. By his false representations of Facts he amused those Gentlemen so much that they wrote to the Hon'ble Gen'l Warren, requesting that he would take some Steps with the Agents to Oblige them to pay those men their Shares whither I would or not. This was not all but the most Extrordinary Step was that they also preposed to appoint Mr. Palmes to go on board the *Warren* at Providence as Capt. of Marines, and to shift the Capt. of Marines of that Ship into the *Boston*, and all this to be done without takeing notice of the Arrest under which Capt. Palmes had been, ever since the 10th of Aug't last.

This I must Complain of as a most unprecedented Step. Never was a man taken from under Arrest and preffer'd to any other Employment without first undergoing a Court Martial. Nor is it possible that ever good order should Exist in armys, or fleets, without takeing care to punnish, cashier, or replemand, such as shall on due trial be found guilty of such offences. If precedents of this kind be permitted once to take place, farewell Discipline and good Order, farewell Honour, and honesty. The Service will then become a recepticall for unclean birds who will hereby be Encouraged to take Shelter there, and all men of good principals will totally forsake it.

Who the man is whom these Gentlemen propose to put on board the *Boston* in Palmes his room, as coming from the *Warren*, I cannot tell; but I hear he cannot Live on board the *Warren*. 'Tis an Old Proverb, that two cheats make the bargain even — but my determination is, never to receive a turn'd over Officer from another Ship without he brings an ample certificate in his hand from his former Commander. This I know to be consistant with good discipline and common honesty and nothing but a resolve of Congress to the contrary will prevail with me to alter my opinion.

God and Nature has said, That one head is indispe[n]sible Necessary on board of a Ship. On that head or principal person, evrey other must have such a Measure of dependance as will urge them to Obey his commands with chearfullness. His Authourity over his Officers and men should be such as to render all his Lawfull commands not only their duty but their intrest to obey them without hesitation. In this channell a Ship full of men may be Governed by a prudent man with ease and certainty, but if ever his authority be disputed by a Second person, a third and a fourth will arise. Consequently the whole will run into Anarchy and Confusion.

To return to the duty of officers with respect to producing Journals, I must say that I know of no Sea Service in the world where Officers are Exempted from this so interesting a piece of duty.

Copys of their Journals must be produced at the pay office with their Captains certificates of their Services. Otherwise they can Expect neither pay nor prize Money, but as we in our Service are frequently in advance for our Officers over and above their wages, their prize money is the only cheque we have upon them. This I think will Justify my proceedings in Stoping their Shares for the reasons already given. Not only this but I will aver that there Never was a Ship on the Continent Either publick or private, whose prize money was paid so soon, and so faithfully as ours has been.

I must now beg leave to give my Opinion respecting Marine officers for such Ships as ours, so much hampered for want of room. I think in concience a Subeltern is Enough, three Marine officers takes up so much room to accomodate them that we are pinch'd beyound measure to afford it. Then they have Little or no duty to do, are allways in the way and apt to disagree with the Sea officers so that it takes much trouble to mannage them, then they run away with so much of the prize money from Officers who are realy usefull, that 'tis painfull to hear the murmerings it Occasions. Might it not be proper to Lessen their Number down to one on board the frigates and give what the other two did Enjoy between the Chaplin and Surg'n. Sure I am that you must alter the System for the Surgeons in the fleet, otherwise you will not have one Man of abillitys in the Service.

I have a young man with me whose Name is William Lamb — in case you think proper to appoint only one Marine officer for our Ship, he well deserves the preference and I should take it as a favour.

A young French Gentleman (his Name is Peter Cavey) who was with us as a Voluntier last cruize appears fond of a Brevet for a Lieutenancy of Marines. If it be Consistent to let him have what he desires, 'twill make him verely happy. I mention this at his request and partly as a recompence for his warm wishes for the wellfare of this country.

This will be handed you by Doctor Linn, the Surgeon of our Ship whom I must beg leave to recommend to your particular Notice.

I am Gentlemen etc.

I cannot close this Letter without acquainting you that I am now upwards of three thousand dollars in advance for the Ship, not having rec'd one farthing since my arrival either to pay off the old hands or Engage new ones. This has everlastingly been my case since I have been with the Ship — the Service I have Ever been Obliged to cary on unsupported, so that I am weary of such work; as both the publick credit, and mine owne have Suffered for want of due Supplys.

TO JOHN ADAMS ¹

SIR

This will be handed you by Doctor John L. Linn, the Surgeon of our Ship. He goes to Congress with designe to Represent the hardships himself and others in that capacity, Suffer at present, from the inadiquate appointment allow'd to Surgeons on board the Navy; I think that instead of crowding our Ships with Marine officers, who are only a burthen, and of no Service in life on board a Ship, 'twould be well to give the Surgeons more Encouragement, and reduce the Number of the Marine officers to one Subeltarn, on board the frigates; then let the Surgeon Share with the Lieutenants and master, in place of the Capt. of Marines, who is as useless a piece of furniture on board a Ship, as a broken pair of bellows at a fire side.

How long shall we Languish here for want of Support — here am I, struggling with dificaltys innumerable; and want of cash has ever been our Lot, since I have been in the service. I was at one time last Spring four thousand pounds in advance for the Ship. I am now more than three thousand dollars in advance, and all this without fee or reward. I must Confess that I am weary of such work. May I ask the favour of you to think of me a Little now and then, if matters of greater importance will permitt your thoughts to range so far from your daily Toils.

May God strengthen your hearts in this day of trial, and save our country by his Almighty power. your Most obed't Servant
Boston 9th Oct'r 1777.

To the Hon'ble John Adams, Member of Congress for the Massacusetts State.

Copy of the above was sent at the same time to Mr. Sam'l Adams.

¹ Letter Book.

TO JOHN BUTLER ¹

BOSTON Oct'r 14th 1777

SIR

I make no doubt but some Sparks of your former Friendship for me will appear, when ever I stand in Need of your good offices;

Such is my case at present. Fortune of war has drawn a young kinsman of mine to Halifax. For him is the inclosed Letter with a bill on our Mutuall Friend Mr. Watson. Shall I intreat of you to pass this bill throu your hands, and give him the Money, he indorseing the Bill. I am Sir your most Obed't Servant,

H. McN.

To the Hon'ble John Buttler Esq'r
at Halifax.

TO ROBERT MCNEILL ¹

BOSTON 14th Oct'r 1777

DEAR ROBERT

This brings you a bill of twenty pounds Sterling on Mr. Brook Watson of London.

I have wrote to the Hon'ble John Buttler of Halifax, to take up this Bill and pray him to give you the Cash on your endorseing it.

I send this to help you and your fellow prisoners (your ship mates in the *Boston*) and I hope if any of them stand in Need you will not see them suffer, John Garrat, Thos. Lovering, among the common men and Gideon Woodwell if he behaves well.

You may Acquaint Mr. Gross and Mr. Harris That I have remitted Cash to both their familys.

I would have sent you more credit but that I have hopes of your being soon relieved. Farewell.

To Robert McNeill, prisoner at Halifax.

TO JOHN HANCOCK ²

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by which means I have got the Ship ready for the Sea (there being nothing to take in at this present time but the Sea provisions

¹ Letter Book.² Letter Book. The first part of this letter is missing.

the powder and a few small Stores), yet for want of money we are obliged to put off the discharged men with Tears in their eyes and are unable to Enter new men, haveing no money Either to pay the former or ingage the Latter.

The incessant Complaints I am obliged to hear of those poor men who want their wages, and the poor women whose husbands are in Captivity while they and their children are Starveing, is Verely discouraging circumstances, and must in the end be fatall to the Service. For Gods Sake, and for your own Sake and your countrys, be pleased to take some Steps whereby those complaints may be redress'd.

Wishing you health and evrey bless[ing] I am Sir.

To the Hon'ble Jno. Hancock.

TO THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS ¹

BOSTON 28th Oct'r 1777

To the Hon'ble Council of the Massachusetts State.

GENTLEMEN

Last Lords day week a certain Mr. Baker who calls himself a Warden did insult a Centinel which I had placed for the Security of the Ships Stores, now altogether on shore at the head of the Hon'ble Mr. Hancocks Wharfe. The Lower Store on that Wharfe is full of them and the Cannon, Cables, Topmasts, yards, Schott and Water Casks takes up the whole Wharfe as far up as the said Store. The Centinel had receiv'd orders to Let no Person Trample upon, nor even go amongst those Articles thus Exposed, either in the Night time, Or on the Sabbath, as the officers of the Ship and most of the Men, were then supposed to be absent, either taking their natural rest, or at some place of Publick Worship.

The reason why such orders had been given the Centinel, was — that several attempts had been made Secretly to Stop up the Vents of our Cannon as they lay on the Wharfe.

These with the Cables, Yards, Topmasts, Anchors, Shott Water Casks, etc. being all Expos'd on the open Wharfe none other Security could be obtained for them Except the Care of the Centinel.

I therefore Conceive it was my duty to appoint one and that

¹ From the Gray Papers.

I had an undoubted right to give such orders, and shall still do what I know to be my duty in this respect, oppose it who will.

One thing I am sure of, that none but bad Men would oppose such a Measure, as the Safety of the Ship and Stores depends on the care that we who are intrusted with them may take of the whole.

On Saturday last a Person who call'd himself a Peace Officer, tho' unknown to me applied desiring I would deliver up that person who had been Centinel on the preceeding Sabbath with whom Mr. Baker had the dispute. This I refused to do being perfectly assured that the Man had only done his duty, and as perfectly Satisfied that Mr. Baker's proceedings was vexatious, Litigious and Spitefull which has been Sufficiently proved by his vile Conduct Last Lords day, for instead of observing the Solemnitys of the Sabbath, he (Mr. Baker) had made it his Business to assemble a band of ruffians, who came down the Wharfe in a Body, attack'd and partly disarm'd the Centinel, some of them Seising him behind his back, others attempting to wrest his firelock out of his hand, and one of them actually Snatch'd the Bayonet from the Muzell of the peice, with it Stab'd the said Centinel, and another person who came to his assistance, Crying out all the time they were about this unhallowed work, that they would Support Civil Government.

If Civil Government cannot be Supported without such measures as these, let it be remember'd that all Men may make the same pretences for Committing any outrage whatever.

My reason for not permitting the officer to go on board the Ship is obvious to all Men who know the nature of Shipping and the Character of Seamen — in the first place, all Possible Excuses for doing Mischiefe or committing irregularitys shou'd be totally taken away from Seamen, their boisterous rude nature being but too apt to catch at any occasion that may offer as a pretext for their Leaping the bounds of good Government. For this reason they ought to be Strictly governed and closely employ'd about their duty as much as Possible. This I have made my Study and have Govern'd that Ships Company for several Months last Winter alongside of the Wharfe, without having one Complaint against any of them, and I think I can bid defiance to all who shall accuse them with unruly behaviour out of the Ship, either on the Sabbath or any other day since the Ship has been in this Port. If this be truth as I can abundantly prove, with what face can it be expected I should give up a faithfull Centinel to the Mallice of an officious durty fellow, who so far from observing the de-

sign of his own appointment, was the first who broke through the rules of decency and good order by attacking and disarming a Centinel placed on our own bounds to take proper care of the Stores belonging to the Ship.

Another reason I have for not suffering Constables to board the Ship, is that every pettyfogger of the Law have it in their power to send such creatures as Constables on their dirty Business.

In this way, groundless, Malicious Prosecutions may be sett on foot. This we have suffer'd in the Course of last Winter more than once. It may be said the Law points out a remedy. I confess it does, but I answer that we have something else to do with our time and Money than to spend them both in disputes at Law.

A third reason I have against permitting Constables to Search Ships is, the moral certainty of their receiving ill treatment in the operation. This would be almost impossible to prevent, nay I shou'd think from what I know of Seamen that such a man on such an errand would be likely to Loose his life or some of his Limbs, rather than find the person he was in pursuit of.

Therefore I am sure it will only tend to farther mischief to insist upon it.

If the Men belonging to the Ship I Command Committ any disorder in the Town or injure the meanest Inhabitant, I Promise to do my utmost that he may be punished according to Law, but if any person comes on board the Ship, or amongst the Ships Stores, or into the Store House hired for the use of the Ship, and there quarrells with my people, I think they ought to reap the fruits of their own folly.

On the Contrary whenever a Complaint is brought to me against one of my Men for committing an unlawfull Action, I will deliver up that Man to the officer of Justice ashore, but I cannot think it prudent to permitt an officer to follow a Man on board the Ship, where it is more than probable he will meet with Dammage rather than find the person he wants.

The reason of my troubling you with this affair, is that I understand a complaint has been made to your Hon'ble Board concerning my refusing Constables, Wardens, etc. a permission to search the Ship. Whatever that complaint may be I am ready and willing to make my defence when call'd upon before your Honours, where I make no doubt I shall be heard with Candour. I am Gentlemen Your most Obed't Servant

HECTOR MCNEILL.

[Memorandum] Copy of my Letter to the Council Oct'r 28th 1777.

CERTIFICATE ¹

These Certify that Thomas Shaw, Seaman belonging to the Ship *Boston*, did on the 19th day of June last fall from the head of the Main Topmast, by which accident his Skull was fractur'd, his Collar Bone and Jaw Bone broke and has finally lost the use of his left Arm, he is therefore recommended to the Hon^{ble} Navy Board for such a Provision as they see Meet.

HECTOR McNEILL.

Ship *Boston*, 27th Decem^r 1777.

PETITION TO CONGRESS ²

To the Honourable, the Continental Congress.

The Petition of Hector McNeill, most humbly Sheweth,

That your petitioner, having had the honour of commanding the continental ship *Boston*, did sail on a cruise from Nantasket road, on the 21st of May 1777, in company with, and under the command of John Manley Esqr. commander of the *Hancock*.

That dureing the aforesaid cruise a Brittish Frigate, call'd the *Fox*, was captured, by the continental ships above mentioned; which Frigate was lost on the 7th of July last, and the *Hancock* also on the day following, both taken by the Enemy.

That in consequence of this Loss, courts Martial have been held on both the commanders of the Continental ships, by the proceedings of which court and more especially their finall Sentence, your Petitioner thinks himself exceedingly Agrieved; inas-much as he finds himself thereby rob'd of his reputation and exposed to perpetuall infamy (as he humbly conceives) without even the Shaddow of Law, or justice, as will sufficiently appear by the severall reasons set forth in his protest of the 30th June 1778.

Your Petitioner humbly presumes, that he can make it appear — That he has not been guilty of any offence within the compass of any of the Articles of war prescribed by the Honourable Congress for the government of the American Navy — and thinks it extremely hard to be condemn'd by Opinion or Prejudice, without Law — he therefore most humbly implores the mercy, and justice of the hon'ble Congress, to save him from the impending ruin, with which he is threatned, and prays that they would order the proceedings of the aforesaid Courts Martial to be re-

¹ Chamberlain Collection, Boston Public Library.

² Papers of Continental Congress XLII. 5, 73.

vised, or take such other Steps as their Wisdom shall think most Expedient for procuring him that Justice which he finds himself under a Necessity of Seeking from them alone, and your Petitioner as in duty bound will ever pray etc. etc.

HECTOR MCNEILL.

Philadelphia, 25th July, 1778.

[*Memoranda*] Hector McNeill's petition to the Hon'ble Continental Congress July 25th, 1778.

Read 29 July, 1778. Referred to the marine Com'ee.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES ¹

PHILADELPHIA, September 4th, 1778

DEAR SIR, —

Many are the Trials, Sorrows, and heartakeings which have fallen to my Lot since I had the pleasure of seeing you.

There can be no doubt of your being acquainted long 'ere this, with the State of my affairs, and of the treatment I have met with, from those of whom I had a right to Expect better things; but as no Sinner can be completely fitted for damnation, without being guilty of the Sin of ingratitude, by this time 'tis to be hoped, That the Cup of the Measure of their iniquity of my enemies may be nearly full.

Such have been my sufferings and so many and mighty are the Numbers of my unprovoked Enemies, That I cannot refrain from comparing my Case, with that of the man (we read of) who fell among the Thieves.

One of the greatest pleasures I have had, has been hearing from you, by three Letters; which I hereby acknowledge the rec't of; and since that hearing of your prosperity. May God preserve you, and send you safe back, to your american Friends among whom I trust you rate y'rs,

HECTOR MCNEILL.

To Jno. Paul Jones, Esq'r.

Addressed,

To John Paul Jones, Esq'r of the *Ranger*, at Brest. Favour'd by Capt. Bell.

Forwarded by Dear Sir Your assured h. St.,
L'Orient 23d Oct'r 1778.

MOYLAN.

[*Memorandum*] From Hector McNeill Esq'r, Philadelphia, Sept'r 4th, 1778. Rec'd Brest Oct'r 28th, 1778.

¹ John Paul Jones MSS., Library of Congress.

TO HIS WIFE ¹

PHILADELPHIA, [September] 14th 1778

MY DEAR MARY,

I received your Letter of the 27th of last month. I am rejoiced to hear that you are in health. May that kind God who has hitherto preserved us continue his favours, and make us thankfull.

I have been detain'd in my affairs here, by a slight indisposition, but am now in good health again bless'd be God; I have wrote you several Letters since my being here, but none of much importance, so that theire miscarrying gives me no other pain, then that of your Anxiety about me. I have gotten all my papers in such forwardness, that I hope Next week will enable me to Lay them before the Committee. Mr. Adams has been as freindly as I could Expect and will, I trust in God, continue to assist me throu with this dreadful Load of care and Sorrow. The heat of this place was exceeding troublesome to me, and the Expencc enough to destroy me but as I am here I will see the matter ended if possible before I quit the place but you may be sure I shall make all the haste to your dear arms, that I possibly can.

My Compliments to the doctor and all freinds. I would have wrote him but my Neck is almost broke with Stooping at the pen for three weeks past — during the whole week past, I have not stir'd out of my room except to go up and down Stairs to Victuals. As to our Liveing Over the winter, I hope God will open some door for our Support, at least we must comfort ourselves by compareing our own cases with that of other peoples. We shall not be so badly Situated as many others; the cry is generall in this place as well as with you. Many people are reduced to great Misery here, and the Necessarys of life exceeding dear.

My Love to you, and my bles[sing] to my Children. May God preserve you all,

Prays your affectionate Husband

HECTOR MCNEILL.

I wrote one Letter by the post this day fortnight, but of no Consequence. You need not write to me after the rec't of this.

¹ From the Gray Papers.

JOHN PAUL JONES TO THOMAS BELL¹

BREST Nov'r 15th 1778

MY DEAR SIR,

It was reported and believed here that you had gone to Passy immediately on your Arrival; otherwise I should have written to you as soon as your return to France was announced. I duly received the letter which you brought from Captain McNeill. I thank you sincerely for your obliging letter of the 3d which unfortunately did not come to my hands till the 12th, else I should have written a Variety of letters to America. I fear they would be after this too late to find you at L'Orient. I forwarded a Packet the 13th for Mr. Morris which I beg you to sink together with the inclosed, rather than suffer them to fall into the Enemies Hands.

Your account of the particular affection towards me of Mr. Morris, Mr. Hewes and other worthy Characters affords me the truest pleasure. I would far rather have the Esteem and Friendship of a few such Men than the empty applause of Millions, who possess less liberal souls. Yet I confess to you that my Vanity is greatly Flattered by your Account of the generous Public approbation of my past Services. And I pledge myself to that generous Public that it shall be my first care and my hearts supremest wish to merit the continuance of its approbation, by my future Services and constant endeavours to Support the Honor of Freedom's Flag.

I should have been happy to have received letters from my friends in America: you say they did not expect to find me still in France; but that need be no Objection after your return to Philadelphia, as you will see by the within copy of a letter from the Commissioners to the Minister of the Marine; which I send you *in Confidence*. Do not however conclude from what you read in that letter, that I mean to draw my Sword as a Commander under any other than the American Flag. The Mystery of my present situation has given foundation to the Vulgar error, that I am on bad terms with the Commissioners at Paris. The Million cannot otherwise account for my not having proceeded in the *Ranger* — as they have seen a Man² in disgrace called back from Nantes to take that Command, who has not had gratitude enough to acknowledge that he owes it either to my lenity towards him-

¹ John Paul Jones MSS., Library of Congress.

² Lieutenant Thomas Simpson, formerly first officer of the *Ranger*, who had been put under arrest by Captain Jones.

self, my feelings for his Wife and Family, or to my duty, which obliged me to oppose the Commissioners who were about to supersede every Lieutenant in the Service, by giving a Captains Commission and the Command of the *Ranger* to Mr. Livingston, who had only made one little Cruise from Bordeaux in the *Boston*, and had left that Ship immediatly on her return to L'Orient on pretence of *Bad Health*. I am sensible however, that this Vulgar Error has been and may be of great disservice to me as almost every person who has gone from France to America within the last three months, have taken with them, in consequence of it, the belief of my Disgrace. Be you my Friend well assured that tho' it has given me much pain to take the steps I have done with an officer, yet I can and will justify myself. They were measures of Necessity, not of choice; yet strictly within the letter and spirit of the Laws of Congress. And if I am blamable, it is for having shewn an ungrateful Man too much lenity. That however is an Error which the Head only will condemn: the Heart will pardon it.

Your account of the situation of Philadelphia and of our Poor Marine distresses much; but let us not altogether despond. Tho' I am no Prophet, the one will yet become the *first City* and the other the *first Navy*, within a much shorter space of time than is generally imagined. When the Enemies land force is once conquered and expelled the Continent, our Marine will rise as if by Enchantment, and become within the memory of Persons now living, the wonder and Envy of the World.

I am exceedingly sorry for Captain Youngs¹ misfortune — the more so as I had the misfortune to advise him to go into Ockrocock. I expect however that he will continue in the Service and have better Fortune. And I hope you have not quitted it. I really feel for my old Friend Captain McNeill and his Family. I'm afraid he has been sacrificed to appease the Cabals of a set of Bad Men, who to my knowledge, owed him the utmost Gratitude. But without entering into the merits of his case, I attest to you that besides his general knowledge of shipp, he inherits more *Marine Knowledge* than any other Man, with whom I have had equal conversation, in the Service: Therefore the loss of such a Man would be very Great.

I am sorry and much disappointed by not hearing from Young, who said so much about his wife's Friend my Fair Mistriss! by his Silence I fear I have a Rival who by Opportunity and im-

¹ John Young of the Continental brig *Independence*, wrecked at Ocracoke Inlet, North Carolina.

portunity may make great and Danceraus Advances towards the Heart before I can arrive to raise the Siege. I'm afraid this making Love by Proxy will not answer; and I shall Despair of its Success Unless I soon receive some Encouragement. I will write to Mr. Brown that good Friend to whom I owe singular Obligations. I will write to Young also and to McNeill, but that I may not loose this Post I have only time to beg you to send me the best Account you can of the Situation of the officers mentioned in the within list, and if you have any Papers, Resolves, or Rules of Congress respecting the Navy in your hands you will much oblige me by Sparing them if you can. My late faithful Subjects have taken, I will not say pilfered, all mine, among other things "For Ships Use." I will see you if you do not depart very soon. If I should not, may the God of Ocean give you Safe Conduct. I am Sincerely your Friend,

[J. PAUL JONES]

Thomas Bell, Esq'r ¹

[Addressed] Thomas Bell, Esq'r, L'Orient.

FROM JOHN PAUL JONES ²

BREST, Nov'r 17th, 1778

I have received, my dear Friend, your letter of the 4th Sept'r last from Philadelphia. Beleive me I have felt and do feel for you and your good Family all that affectionate Sorrow and regret that ought to actuate the Mind of a Friend. I am to this hour unacquainted with the detail of your strange misfortune. Strange! It must be, since why did not your Enemies step forth with their Cabals immediatly on your return to Boston? I have had the mortification to see the *Boston* here, with such Officers! Our Navy makes no very Brilliant or promising beginning. Nine out of Ten of the actors in a certain Sphere as far as my knowledge goes, have the most selfish, contracted Souls that ever animated human Nature. But the supreme power of America will soon I hope have leasure to seperate the Wheat from the Chaff. There are in the World in some Classes a great Majority of Dunces, who wish to root out and extirpate every thing like genius that comes among them, least their little selfish Minds should be exposed and their grovelling actions outshone. And where it is

¹ Captain of an American privateer.

² John Paul Jones MSS., Library of Congress.

the hard lot of a liberal Minded Man to be connected with such beings, he may well be said to have "fallen among the Theives." I have seen an old Lieutenant of mine on board the *Providence*, Mr. Pitcher, who tho I had but a moments time with him told me that your treatment had been very personal and Unjust, and that he had publicly given that as his Opinion at the time in Boston.

I shall at present only return you my Sincere Thanks for your good Opinion and good Wishes. No man I believe ever had more Credit for a *little service* in Europe than myself. Yet I can assure you that my Roses have not been without a Superabundance of Thorns. I have experienced Ingratitude from Men to whom I had shewn the highest degree of Hospitallity and Kindness—even after repeated instances of their misbehaviour: But this is the way of the World and we must do good without views of thanks. Captain Bell will inform you further. I have written to him and hope he will favor me with the particulars that respect you: In that Case you will hear from me again by him if a letter can overtake him at L'Orient. I wish you Happy in everything and I wish America may not overlook your principles and Abilities to support the Honor of her Flag. I am My dear Sir with real Affection Yours,

[J. PAUL JONES]

Hector McNeill, Esq'r
Captain in the American Navy.

N.B. When you write to me direct to the Care of Mr. James Moylan of L'Orient, Mr. John Ross or Mr. Jon'a Williams¹ of Nantes, or his Excellency Doctor Franklin, Paris.

TO HIS WIFE²

PHILAD'A, Jan'y 13th 1779

MY DEAREST MARY,

May God grant you a happy New Year, and ease your Anxious thoughts concerning me. Little did I think to have been so Long detained in this place when I left your dear company but such has been my hard fate, that all my endeavours to compleat the business I came upon has only amounted to a Shaddow without Substance. It is now no Longer kept Secret here, That the Com-

¹ Moylan, Ross, and Williams were United States commercial agents.

² From the Gray Papers.

mittee of Congress to whom my affair was committed have given their opinion in my favour and do acknowledge that the treatment I have met with, has been most cruel and unjust; but notwithstanding they have Agreed on this more then two months past, yet Such is the Multiplicity of business, and continual hurry of congress, that no convenient oppertunity has yet offer'd for the committee, to deliver in their report, so as to have the matter fininished by them, So that I am determined (please God) to set out for you in the course of all next week whither it be fininished or not.

Pray keep the contents of this Letter as much to your self as possible for some weeks to come, least it should awaken the persecuting Spirit of mine Enemies who have taken all the pains they possibly could by writeing here to prejudice me with the members of congress.

My Love and blessing and the blessing of God rest on you and my poor children who I fear have begun to feel the want of a father.

My compliments to Doctor Linn and all Freinds. I have sent by Mr. Brewer the Flour of Zinc which the doctor wrote for so long agon. Your Loveing Husband

HECTOR MCNEILL.

[Addressed] To Mrs. Mary McNeill, Boston. Favour'd by Mr. Brewer.

[Memorandum] January 13 1779. Philedelfe.

HECTOR MCNEILL TO SAMUEL ADAMS¹

SIR, — Although I know that your time is constantly taken up with matters of importance, yet I cannot help begging your attention for a few moments to the case of a person now under distress in this City whose situation formerly I was well acquainted with.

I believe you are no stranger to the deplorable circumstances our army in Canada were reduc'd to, immediatly after the death of General Montgomrie.

I my self am a witness, of the amazeing fortitude and perseverance of that handfull which remained under Gen'l Arnold, who with a number much less than half the Garrison, kept up the

¹ *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, XII. 276. This letter and the three Paul Jones letters of 1782, printed below, were read to the Society at the October meeting, 1872, by the late William Sumner Appleton, Esq.

Blockade of Quebec for some months untill reinforcements arived from these States: it was at that critical time the General stood in great need of the assistance and friendship of the canadians, who although they were well disposed towards the american army, and their cause, yet were frightened by their preists, who threatened them with Excommunication, and had actually refused evrey church privelidge to any who served or inclined to serve on the side of the Americans; On this occasion the person above spoken of step'd forth, and offerd his services as a clergyman for the canadians, which good pollicy, and the Exigencey of our affairs, inclined the Gen'l to accept, and Mr. Lobenier was accordingly appointed chaplain to a Canadian Reg't, much to the satisfaction of those poor men, who thought their eternall fillicity depended on the assistance of a priest.

It is beyond a doubt that the part Mr. Lobenier had taken rendered him obnoxious to the Brittish, consequently he was obliged to quit his native country with our retreating army and throw himself on the mercy of a people whose part he had taken in the darkest hour of their distress.

Since our arival in this City he has enjoyed, by the Bounty of congress, a small pittance, which has made his Exile Tollerable untill the setting in of the present Winter; but as the times grow worse, even with those who have much greater Resources then this poor gentleman can possibley have, so has it fallen heavily on him; for ever since the Last of november he has been retrench'd of fire and candle, which at this pinching season of the year are undoubtedly among the Necessarys of Life; Espacially to a man in his situation, burthened with age, an utter stranger among us, and totally unable even to begg in our Language.

I know this man as a Gentleman, to belong to one of the Greatest familys in canada, and as a clergyman I believe the only one of that country honoured with the Religious Cross of Malta; I know also that he enjoyed a Liveing worth between four and five hundred pounds sterling a year, besides a Patrimonial Estate, all of which he has Lost through his friendship for the americans. What pitty it is then, that in addition to the sacrifices he has made for our sakes, he should be suffered to pine away in want and misery, during his Exile from his friends and Countrey—in short I am shocked at the idea of the consequences this mans case may produce hereafter; a time may come once more when we may stand in need of the Freindly offices of the canadians, who I fear instead of assisting us, will have reason to take warning, and reproach us with the unhappy fate of the Refugees from that coun-

try, many of whom are now Exposed to Extream poverty, and Little or no Notice taken of their sufferings.

I think it my Duty to make you acquainted with Mr. Lobenier's Case in particular, not doubting of your disposition for doing all the Good you can on evrey Occasion.

I am Sir, with due Respect and Defference, Your most Obed't Servant,

HECTOR MCNEILL.

PHILADELPHIA, January 14th, 1779.

The address "To the Honb'le Samuel Adams" has a pen drawn through it. The letter is labelled, "Copy to Mr. . . . on Lobeniers Situation Jany 14th 1779." — Eds.¹

REPORT OF THE MARINE COMMITTEE²

The Marine Committee to whom was referred the Trial and Sentence of the Court Martial upon Capt. McNeil beg leave to report,

That after examining with great Care and attention, the several Charges exhibited against Capt. McNeil, and the Depositions of the Witnesses produced to support them, they are of opinion, the Charges are not supported by Evidence, and that the Sentence against Capt. McNeil ought not to be carried into execution.³

Amendment. That the Sentence of the Court Martial against Capt McNeil be not caried into execution.

Memorandum: Report from the Marine Com'ttee on Capt. McNeil's Trial.

Read Jan'y 15, 1779. An amendment made then whole postponed.

MEMORIAL⁴

To His Excellency The President of Congress.

SIR, — The Sacrifice which I chearfully made of a Large intrest in Canada for the sake of my country, and the Impossibility of ever making good any part of that Loss, renders me but Little

¹ Footnote, *Proceedings*, XII. 276.

² Papers of Continental Congress, XXXVII. 163.

³ This paragraph is crossed out in the original ms.

⁴ Papers of the Continental Congress.

able to Support the Expences of a journey to this city, and a Residence in it for the Space of eight months; Yet the Reason of my attending upon the Congress, Namely to recover what is dearer to me than Life, my Reputation and Honor, and the confidence I have in the Candour and justice of that Honorable Body, and in mine own Innocence and Integrity, promise me a full Reward for this Expensive Attendance; as soon as the Happy moment Shall arrive when Attention can with propriety be given to a Memorial which I was permitted to Lay before them in July Last and their Determination can be had thereon.

It may be a Misfortune to me to be Little known to the Honorable Members; but I have carefully avoided makeing personal Applications to any of them, Least I might give offence; being Sensible that this was a point of Delicacy, and that they must be jealous of their Honor as I am of my own. I have on the contrary, perhaps too Scrupulously, kept my Self at a distance from them during the whole time that I have been patiently waiting their Leisure.

May I be permitted to say, That when I first enter'd the publick Service in the American Navy, I had a Character unspotted and unsuspected; It might be thought vain if I should add, that my Ability as an officer had been Acknowledged by the best sea officers, Viz Admirals Boscawen, Saunders, Durrell, and Colvil, under each of whom I had served as Commander of an Arm'd Vessell of war, and I flatter my Self Should have been Rewarded with a better Ship, had not my Superior Atachment to this country withdrawn me from that service.

My Appointment in the continental Navy gave great Satisfaction to some of the most Zealous of its Freinds, which unfortunately for me they express'd, in such Terms, as tended to render me the Innocent Object of Envy. To attempt to point out the Rocks and Quicksands on which my poor Bark has been Shipwreck'd, would on this Occasion be impertinent; Although the most Experienced and best officers in the Navy may Suffer the Same Misfortune. I hope however I may be indulged in only Suggesting, That by the rules of the British Navy, which perhaps are as well digested as any in the known world, a courtmartial for the trial of a Captain shall consist of captains, who are in full pay and have Ships under their Command. Thus he may be said to be tried by his peers — but for the trial of an officer of the same Rank in the American Navy, it is Otherwise; the court consisting of three captains and three Lieutenants of Ships and three captains and three Lieutenants of Marines — I am by no

means Arraigning my court-Martial; but the circumstance of so great a part of it being *not Seamen* but Landsmen was materially important in my case; for although I humbly conceive it must be Obvious to any one who Examines the witnesses that appeared against me, that in diverse Material Instances they contradicted themselves and each other, my dependance in my defence was on the Propriety of Navigating the Ship at a Most *Critical* Juncture, of which those gentlemen with the most upright intentions could not possibly form any Judgement. As there is no commander in cheife at present in the American Navy, I am deprived of the Benefit which was provided for, by the wisdom of Congress when I was appointed to a Command; — Namely of Appealing to a most able judicious and impartial Seaman, to determine whither Sentence Should be carried into Execution. Under this circumstance I was induced to throw my Self on the candour and justice of the Honorable Congress; and it is my most humble and earnest Request that my case may be taken up, considered and finally determined as Speedily as can consist with a Necessairy attention to other Matters of greater publick importance.

I am Sir with the highest Respect and deference your Most Humble and Obedient Servant

HECTOR MCNEILL.

PHILADELPHIA Feb'y 15th 1779.
To The Honorable John Jay Esq'r
President of Congress.

PETITION ¹

State of Mass'tts Bay.

To the Hon'ble the Council of the State aforesaid.

The Petition of John Tracey and others of Newbury Port

Humbly sheweth

That your Petitioners have fitted out the Brig. called the *Pallas* burthened One hundred and forty Tons, mounting Sixteen Carriage Guns and navigated by forty five men,

having on board as Provisions twenty Bls. of Beef and Pork and two thousand W. of bread,

as Ammunition two hundred W. of Powder and Shot in Proportion.

Said Brig. is intended as a Letter of Marque.

¹ Mass. Arch., CLXXI. 164.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly request your Honors to Commission Hector McNeil as Commander of said Brig. for the Purpose above mentioned. And as in Duty bound will ever pray etc.

HECTOR MCNEILL *on behalf of the Concerned*
Boston May 22d 1780.

In Council May 22, 1780 Read and Ordered that Hector McNeill be Commissioned as Commander of the within Vessel, he complying with the Resolves of Congress.

JOHN AVERY, D.S.N.

[Memorandum] Petition of Hector McNeil in behalf of John Tracey and others of Newbury Port for a Commission for a Letter of Marque, with Order thereon. May 22d, 1780.

PETITION ¹

To his Excellency the Governor and Hon'ble Council of the Commonwealth of Mass'tts.

The Petition of Hector McNeil and others of Boston

Humbly sheweth

That your Petitioners have fitted out the Ship *Adventure* burthen'd three hundred Tons, mounting Six Carriage Guns and navigated by forty five men,

having on board as Provisions thirty Bls. of Beef and Pork and thirty hundred of Bread, as Ammunition two hundred W. of Powder and Shot in proportion.

Said Ship is intended as a Letter of Marque.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly request your Excellency and Honors to Commission Hector McNeil as Commander for the purpose above mentioned. And as in Duty bound will ever pray etc.

HECTOR MCNEIL

Boston Nov. 21st 1780.

In Council Nov'r 22, 1780, Read and Advised That his Excellency Commission Hector McNeill as Com'r of the Ship *Adventure* he complying with the Resolves of Congress.

JNO. AVERY, Sec.

[Memorandum] Petition of Hector McNeill and others for Commission for Ship *Adventure* and Order. Nov'r 22, 1780.

¹ Mass. Arch., CLXXI, 307.

PAUL JONES TO HECTOR MCNEILL ¹

PORTSMOUTH, New Hampshire, March 21st 1782

I am honored, my dear friend, with your favors of the 7th by Post and by Mr. Brown. I need not tell you I am sorry for the difficulties that seem to stand in the way of what I mentioned respecting you to the Minister of Finance and of the Marine; who wrote me he had given Orders to Mr. Brown in consequence. Mr. Brown has not shewn me his Orders, and I cannot ask him how far they extend; but when we take leave of each other I will mention your subject and say everything I can on the occasion. I think he will do whatever may be consistent with his Orders. — I am greatly obliged by your kind intention of honoring me with a visit here. If this could be done consistent with Business, I should be earnest in Urging it; but purely as a compliment to me, however flattering it is, I must not — I cannot expect it. If your Business should bring you to Newbury, it would be easy for me to meet you there; and if you could then conveniently come on with me to Portsmouth to see the *America* ² and spend a few Days with your Friends here, I should be very happy in your Company. — It is probable that Business may bring me to Boston in the summer, so that I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you at all events before I again leave the Continent. I am happy to hear Mrs. McNeil and your Family are well, and pray you to return them my respectful Compliments. — Excuse the liberty I take of enclosing a Guinea which I pray you to *Invest* in good Hair Powder, and ship it to my address, on a Coasting Vessel said to be now at Boston and bound here. *Entre nous* there is none of that Luxury to be had here; except such as is impregnated with Luxurious Mites. I am always Your affectionate

PAUL JONES

Hector McNeil, Esq., Boston.

PAUL JONES TO HECTOR MCNEILL ³

PORTSMOUTH, May 25th 1782

I am honored, my dear friend, with your esteemed favor of the 20th. I am altogether in the dark about what has been done or is doing to re-establish the credit of our Marine. In the

¹ *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, XII, 277.² The 74-gun Continental ship on the stocks at Portsmouth.³ *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, XII, 278.

course of near Seven Years service I have continually suggested what has occurred to me as most likely to promote its honor and render it serviceable to our Cause; but my Voice has been like a cry in the Desert: I know no remedy but patience. No man can be more in suspense than I am — and my reason as well as my feelings correspond with yours in lamenting the protraction of Justice to men who have merited the smiles of the Sovereign Authority. Whatever I have written or may Write to you on so delicate a Subject must be *in confidence* — I fondly hope the times will mend, and that Merit and Abilities will yet find encouragement; but were I used ever so ill I determine to persevere, till my Country is Free. When I hear any thing farther I shall not fail to write you, meantime present my affectionate respects to your family and believe me

Your

PAUL JONES

N.B. I duly received the Hair Powder; which is very good and is a great favor.

Hector McNeil, Esq., Boston.

PAUL JONES TO HECTOR MCNEILL¹

PORTSMOUTH, N. Hampshire, Sept. 17th 1782

Your Letter, my dear friend, by Monsieur Ravy, was delivered to me by that Gentleman Yesterday. I conducted him and his companion over the River to see the *America*, but as he departs this morning I am precluded from showing him the attentions due to every recommendation of yours. I expect we shall launch the *America* within four weeks, and the present prospect of affairs leaves me some room to think I may shortly visit Boston. You will believe the pleasure of seeing you and yours well will not be my *least* inducement. I am sincerely and affectionately Your friend,

PAUL JONES

Hector McNeil, Esq., Boston.

¹ *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.*, XII, 279.

FROM JOHN PAUL JONES

CAPE FRANCOIS, April 26th 1783¹

DEAR SIR,

After a variety of Storms on the Coast of America in which while we endeavoured without Success first to join the Ships of War from Portsmouth, and then the *Fantasque* from Rhode Island, having separated from our Convoy, the Squadron arrived on the coast of Portorico. There we learned that Admiral Hood was off this Harbour with Sixteen Ships of the Line. Having cruised and practiced the Tactic Navale off Porto Rico for a week, we took under Convoy part of a Fleet of Store Ships arrived in the Port of St Johns from France, and steered to the Southward between Porto Rico and the Mona. On the 10th Feby the *Triomphant* Anchored at Porto Cabello in New Spain, having beat to windward many days along the Coast. We found in that Port the two Ships *L'Auguste* and *le Pluton* from Portsmouth, and all the rest of the Squadron arrived afterwards except the *Bourgougne* of 74 Guns that was totally lost on the Coast with 200 of her Officers and Men. The Transports also at last arrived except a few that bore away for this Island and one that was lost on little Curacoa. We remained at Porto Cabello to refit till the 5th of this Month and then Sailed for this port, having a few days before received by a Frigate from France the glorious and agreeable News of a general Peace. Porto Cabello was the Rendezvous given by Don Salano to the Marquis de Vaudreuil. We found the Spanish Squadron here, they having learned the News of Peace at Porto Rico. The squadron of France and the Army are Ordered for France — that of Spain with thier Army are ordered to the Havannah. I embark to Night in a Vessel bound for Philadelphia. I shall be happy to hear from you on my arrival there and to be favored with your opinion on the present situation and the most prudent measures to be adopted for the first three Years respecting the formation of our Marine, both as to Officers, Ships² and Regulations, as well as materials and building &c. I have not been Idle since I saw you, but have collected many Ideas on the Subject. If I can render you any Acceptable Service at Philadelphia, you will avail of the Occasion of my being there, and if you please you will mention what is done with my Horses. I pray you present my respectful compliments to M^{rs} McNeil and your young Ladies. Accept my compliments that the posi-

¹ From the Bostonian Society.² This word is crossed out in the original ms.

tion of Public Affairs will now enable you to reclaim and withdraw your Interest from Canada, and be assured that no circumstance that concerns you is to me indifferent. It will give you pleasure to know I have been treated with perfect and Uncommon Kindness by all the Admirals, Generals and other officers of the Fleet and Army.¹ I am your friend and Servant

J. PAUL JONES

Hector McNeil, Esq^r Boston.

TO JOHN PAUL JONES ²

BOSTON June 11th 1783

DEAR SIR,

With inexpressible pleasure I Rec'd your kind Letter of the 26th of April, written at Cape Francois; it came to hand yesterday, and brought me the wellcome News of your health, and your intention of returning once more to this continent.

I thank you for the narrative you have given me of your Late Excursion with the Marquis de Veaudrile and find my self extremely happy, that you are so well pleased with the reception you mett with from the french gentlemen; who it must be acknowledged, are truely polite on all Occasions.

As to your Horses, Mr. Russell sent them out into the country for keeping, and towards the Spring I sent a certain Colonel Hull (who wanted a pair of Horses) directions where to find them. Whither he liked them or not I cannot say, but I reather think he did not like them, as in case he had Seriously thought of purchasing them he would have call'd upon me again, but Mr. Russell told me that he had a prospect of Selling [them?] to our Mr. Lowell a Member of [illegible] Since which I have said nothing to him about them.

Your Sleigh I did endeavour to have it brought to Town, but was not able to effect it oweing either to the want of snow, or the infidelity of the several Messengers by whom I sent.

I shall take an oppertunity of answering the other part of your Letter, and in the mean time assure you of my sincere wishes for your health and prosperity. My family who are in good health Joine with me in those wishes. I am Your freind and Humble Servant

HECTOR MCNEILL.

To the Chevelier Jno. Paul [Jones].

¹ Captain Jones was with the French fleet, on board the flagship of the admiral, Marquis de Vaudreuil.

² John Paul Jones MSS., Library of Congress.

HENRY KNOX TO MRS. MCNEILL¹

NEW YORK 2 October 1787

DEAR MADAM,

Yesterday I received your favor of the 14th of last month together with the accounts and vouchers, of my much valued friend your late husband. I most willingly undertake the office you have assigned me. I have delivered the papers to the Commissioner for the marine department and I am flattered with the hope, that in a few days a statement of the accounts will be made. You may rest assured that this business shall be brought to the speediest issue consistent with the essential forms of office.

In every instance within my power, I should experience real satisfaction, in being able to promote in any degree your interests and those of your family. I am dear Madam with sincere respect
Your most obedient humble Servant,

H. KNOX²

Mrs. Mary McNeill.

NEW YORK October 10th 1787³

DEAR MADAM,

I wrote you on the 2d instant that I had received the accounts of your late husband with the United States and that I had delivered them to the Commissioner of the marine department.

I now enclose you a statement made by the commissioner which with the explanations accompanying it will point out the difference between it and the account you forwarded.

Although I had perfect confidence in the equity and abilities of Colonel Walker,⁴ the commissioner, yet I conceived that it might afford you more solid satisfaction were the accounts also minutely investigated either by me or some other person on your behalf. I employed a gentleman in whom I could confide, who has satisfied me of the accuracy and propriety and even liberality of the settlement of Colonel Walker.

You will find that Captain McNeil overcharged the public with the sum of £4,193.8.0 and that he also credited himself for more than he ought by the amount of £3,246.3.9 and that the difference against him in these debits and credits amount to £947.4.3. which sum when reduced to specie is 1018 $\frac{45}{80}$ dollars.

The great article of deduction from the account forwarded is

¹ From the Gray Papers.

² General Henry Knox, Secretary of War.

³ From the Gray Papers.

⁴ Benjamin Walker, Commissioner of accounts, Marine Department, Continental Congress.

the commissions amounting to £448.8.11, which has never been allowed in any similar case.

On the whole the result of the account as stated by the Commissioner is not different in any considerable degree from the one stated by Captain McNeil of March 30, 1778 and herewith returned together with the account settled by Mr. Cushing.

Captain McNeil stated a balance due him of 6176⁸⁵ which when liquidated by the scale of depreciation would be 1992⁸⁰ dollars. The sum in specie allow'd by the Commissioner is 2091⁵⁴ which is more by 98⁸⁴ specie dollars than the liquidated sum stated by Captain McNeil.

It is to be observed that had not the commissioner separated the articles of pay and subsistence of Captain McNeil from the general account that the balance of specie would have been less by two thirds than it now is for those articles of the account.

The article of subsistence is the only article which has been assumed—all the others were supported by evidence in the office: if this article should not be agreeable to you and you can produce satisfactory evidence to make it appear that he was a longer period on shore and will please to forward it, the account will be conformed accordingly as will also any other parts on your producing evidence to support a different statement.

But if you should consider the account as stated by the Commissioner as the proper settlement or the best that can be obtained and will signify the same to me I will receive the certificates from him for the balance due and remit them to you by the first opportunity. It is to be observed that the certificates for the balance will be for specie. It is however to be lamented that they are at present most exceedingly below par, but it is the only payment that can be obtained and such as has been given to the late army and all others to whom the United States are indebted. The certificates will bear an interest of 6 per cent from the time the balance became due.

I am Dear Madam with great sincerity Your most obedient humble Servant

H. KNOX.

Mr. NORCROSS exhibited, with brief remarks, the original return of the coroner's jury on the death of Michael Johnson, alias Crispus Attucks.

Remarks were made during the meeting by Messrs. DOWSE, NORCROSS, and SHATTUCK.



Alden Bradford

MEMOIR

OF

ALDEN BRADFORD¹

By SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON

Alden Bradford, an early member of this Society, was born in Duxbury, Massachusetts, November 19, 1765, and died at Boston, October 26, 1843. His career was somewhat more varied than that of the New England "Brahmin caste" to which he belonged, embracing as it did the ministry, politics, journalism, theological and historical writing. In no sense an eminent person, he was what his contemporaries would call a "highly respectable character," of whom the death notices concluded "A good name is better than riches." Out of the large number of Massachusetts historians, he is one of the very few who produced a history of that commonwealth.

Fifth in descent from the governor and historian of the Plymouth Colony, Alden Bradford was the offspring of Colonel Gamaliel Bradford, and of Sarah Alden, a descendant of the hero of Longfellow's poem. Nowadays, the posterity of these Pilgrim fathers is scattered over the entire United States; but in the year 1765, when Alden Bradford was born at Duxbury, the greater part of them lived within a day's ride of Plymouth Rock, exercising every calling from merchant and divine to yeoman and laborer. The particular line of Bradfords from which Alden was descended, had maintained the Governor's tradition of public service. Alden's

¹ Compiled largely from a MS. memoir by his son, Thomas Bradford, and from a notice by John G. Palfrey in the *Christian Examiner*, xxxv. 375 (1844).

grandfather, the Hon. Gamaliel, had been a member of the Council of Massachusetts Bay, and a judge in Plymouth County. His father, Col. Gamaliel, earned his title in the War of Independence, after serving also in the Seven Years' War. He was a magistrate, a shipowner, and a person of some consequence in the little shipping community of Duxbury.

The family, as yet, had achieved no distinction outside the field of public service. No one of Alden's ancestors had been to college. His brother, and elder by two years, Captain Gamaliel, showed great promise as a boy, and was being prepared for college by the leading lawyer and the minister of Duxbury, both Harvard graduates, when the Revolution broke out. Gamaliel followed his father to the war, and won an ensign's commission at the age of sixteen. On obtaining his discharge in 1783, at the age of twenty, Gamaliel was considered too old to become a freshman; doubtless he did not relish the idea of being in a class below his brother Alden, who in the meantime had become the family representative at Harvard. Gamaliel thereupon went to sea, rose quickly to the command of a vessel, and lost a leg when commanding an armed merchantman during the naval hostilities with France. From the little that he wrote, one feels that Captain Gamaliel's literary talents were decidedly superior to those of his younger brother; and his mind was more active and robust. But for the war, Captain Gamaliel might well have attained the distinguished place in letters that was sought by his brother, but not attained.¹

Graduating from Harvard in 1786, Alden Bradford supported himself for a year by teaching school in Milton, and then began to study for the ministry with the Rev. Dr. Samuel West of Dartmouth. "Father West," as his pupils called him, was a leading light of his day, a protagonist of the doctrine of free will, and precursor of a liberal theology.²

¹ See Alden Bradford's memoir of his brother in 3 *Collections*, i. 202, Dr. Convers Francis's memoir of Dr. Gamaliel Bradford, (son of the Captain) in 3 *Collections*, ix. 75, and Edward H. Clement's memoir of Gamaliel Bradford (1831-1911) in *Proceedings*, XLVII. 356. One of Captain Gamaliel Bradford's daughters, Sarah Alden Bradford, as Mrs. Samuel Ripley, was famous for her erudition as well as her efficient conduct of family and household; see Emerson's remarks on her in his published Journals.

² See Bradford's generous notice of him in his *New England Biography*.

In 1790, Bradford obtained a license to preach from the Plymouth Association of Congregational ministers; but instead of taking a parish, he accepted an appointment as tutor of Greek at Harvard College. On January 25, 1793, he was elected the twenty-fifth resident member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and shortly after contributed to the *Collections* a topographical description of his native place.¹

During the same year he resigned his college position and accepted a call to the Congregational Church of Wiscasset, then the East Parish of Pownalborough, District of Maine.

No one can pass through Wiscasset today, without noting the spacious elm-shaded mansions of brick and wood, built in the dignified style of architecture that prevailed in the Federalist period of our history. One of the more modest sort was built by Bradford about 1810. Considering the long passage to open water, down the Sheepscot River, the nearness of other seaports such as Bath, Damariscotta and Boothbay, the early prosperity of Wiscasset requires some

¹ Bradford resigned from this society in 1820, before his historical work was fairly begun, on the ground that he could no longer afford the annual dues. He was tendered a resolution of thanks for his services, granted the use of the library on the same terms as resident members, and continued to contribute to the *Collections*; even to describe himself as a member on the title-pages of his works. An ill-judged act of generosity on his part, at the expense of the Commonwealth, subsequently involved the Society in difficulties. Bradford at this time was Secretary of the Commonwealth, and as such had charge of the Archives. Finding among them a mass of manuscripts formerly belonging to Governor Hutchinson, evidently preserved from destruction at the time of the Stamp Act riots, and only accidentally, apparently, belonging to the state archives, Bradford obtained informal permission from the Governor's Council to present them to the Society. The following year, he reported his action to the General Court, which made no objection. The Society accepted the manuscripts, and printed some of them. In 1846 the Commonwealth demanded their return, but was refused (*Proceedings*, II. 332, 436-41). In 1870 the demand was renewed, but again refused (*Proceedings*, XI. 335-44); but in 1874, after a suit in equity for their possession had been entered against the Society, they were returned (*Proceedings*, XIII. 217-32). Of course, Bradford should have obtained a joint resolve of the General Court before handing over to the Society anything in possession of the Commonwealth, however dubious the Commonwealth's title to it might have been. But a hundred years ago state officials, antiquarians and autograph collectors were accustomed to help themselves to the contents of public archives; and Bradford doubtless felt that the best way to insure the preservation of the Hutchinson MSS. was to present them to the Society.

explanation. Alden Bradford gives it, in the description which he contributed to our Collections in 1800. The Sheepscot River, unlike the Kennebec, was easily entered by sailing vessels, and almost never obstructed by ice. Ten fathoms could be carried up to the Wiscasset wharves, at one of which the largest vessels of that day could float at low water. The back country was fast being cleared into farms; and lumber, the staple product of the region, could be floated down the tidal portion of the Sheepscot, and diverted from the Kennebec by the Sassanoa River and Montseag Bay. Wiscasset was conveniently situated for shipbuilding, and her lumber found a ready market in Great Britain and the West Indies. In 1800, thirty square-rigged vessels were owned there, and in 1807, just before Jefferson's embargo, which brought the golden age of its prosperity to a close, Wiscasset owned 16,350 tons of shipping, which put it ahead of such ports as Gloucester, Providence, New Haven, Alexandria and Savannah. It was also a shire town. Our young minister, then, found himself in a brisk, prosperous community, with a pleasant society of merchants and professional men. Shortly after his settlement, in 1795, he married Margaret Stevenson, of Boston, the daughter of a Scots merchant, and granddaughter of George Duncan, one of the Scots-Irishmen who came to Massachusetts-Bay in 1718.

Although Wiscasset was a healthy spot, writes Bradford in his description, "More persons die of consumption, than of any other disease. And this is probably owing to the too frequent use of spirits, and tea. A great proportion of the common people are intemperate in the use of spirituous liquors, and often drink tea twice a day." In view of these remarks, it must have afforded the good people of Wiscasset some amusement as well as grief when in the following year, 1801, their pastor himself was attacked by "lung fever." As the doctors gave him only a few months to live (he actually lived forty-two years), he resigned his pastoral office. Quickly improving in health, he obtained an appointment as clerk of the courts in Lincoln County, which enabled him to prolong his residence at Wiscasset.

As this appointment indicates, Alden Bradford was a

Federalist. His printed fast-day sermons, his eulogy of Washington, and his Fourth of July orations, leave no doubt of the ardor of his political opinions. Consequently he lost his office in 1811, when Governor Gerry made the memorable clean sweep.

Removing to Boston, Bradford established a bookselling and publishing business under the name of Bradford & Read. It was unsuccessful, and the firm broke up in two or three years' time; Bradford was still paying its debts in 1820.

In the meantime, the Federalists had returned to power, and in 1812 the Great and General Court elected Alden Bradford to the important office of Secretary of the Commonwealth.

During the twelve years that he occupied this position, Bradford edited a volume of Massachusetts State Papers of the Revolutionary period, (still a most useful collection), wrote anonymously several theological tracts, and published the first volume of his *History of Massachusetts*, covering the period 1765-1775.

This volume, and the two others which brought Massachusetts history down to 1820, filled at that time a "long-felt want." The third volume of Hutchinson had not yet appeared, and Minot's *Continuation* brought the story only down to 1765. But Bradford's work had no permanent value. Although a careful, honest, and on the whole accurate historian, his conception of history is narrow, his style dry and lifeless, and his treatment of recent events partisan, without the vigor that is the merit of that defect. Nor does he seem to have profited by the abundant archival material under his charge as Secretary of the Commonwealth. The third volume, however, contains in an appendix some important state papers of the War of 1812; perhaps the only part of the work for which a student of Massachusetts history might profitably consult it. Otherwise, it was superseded by Barry's Massachusetts, and the last volume of Palfrey.

The same lifelessness and narrowness characterize Bradford's other historical work — his one-volume *History of Massachusetts for Two Hundred Years*, and his *History of the Federal Government for Fifty Years*, which appeared on the eve of the presidential campaign of 1840, with a fulsome

dedication to William Henry Harrison. Even as a local historian, Bradford is not to be mentioned in the same breath with Belknap or Hutchinson.

In the state election of 1824 the Federal party was again defeated, this time for good, and once more the political axe was felt by Alden Bradford. "There was indeed a charge against me," he writes, "that I had shown some private letters of the Governor. But this was proved to be wholly untrue, soon after; and the Governor acquitted me entirely, in the affair, of dishonorable or improper conduct. After this, I devoted myself, more than usual, to literary labors."¹ Of his many productions, theological, historical, political and biographical, the only one of genuine merit is the *Life of Jonathan Mayhew*, which, owing to generous quotations from Mayhew's letters and writings, has a value equal to the best contemporary biographies of revolutionary worthies.

His only other biographical work of any pretention, the *New England Biography* of 1842, violates the first principles of a biographical dictionary in omitting dates of birth, death, appointment to office, and the like. Bradford contributed articles to the *Boston Magazine*, *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine*, and other periodicals.

Alden Bradford did not, however, wholly abandon politics. In 1824, after his removal from office, he became editor for a time of the *Boston Gazette*. He was chairman of an anti-Adams caucus in Boston, before the presidential election of 1824. He obtained an appointment as justice of the peace in New Bedford, at a time when that office involved duties now performed by a police court. There he became interested in anti-masonry. After his return to Boston, we find him mentioned among those present at a meeting of "Temperance Whigs."

Alden Bradford's printed sermons, during his active ministry, bear the stamp of orthodoxy. After his removal to Boston he joined the Brattle Square Church, the cradle of Boston Unitarianism. In his *Life of Mayhew*, and in several theological tracts, he flays Calvinism without mercy. In a pamphlet of 1823 he describes himself as a Berean, and the

¹ From an autobiographical fragment, copied by the Rev. John Pierce into his *Diary* (MS.), n.s. i. 328.

following quotation from Palfrey's memoir seems to indicate that Alden Bradford was considered rather a tardy recruit to the Unitarian ranks. "His theological works, manifesting themselves uniformly as the fruits of candid, inquisitive and upright investigation, and betokening the action of a kind and Christian spirit, would have attracted more attention, had they appeared at that different period of theological inquiry in this country, when their author's opinions were formed."

Faint praise indeed; and in the same memoir Bradford's historical work is significantly unmentioned. But Palfrey's tribute to Alden Bradford's character is without qualification. "He was a man of sterling and independent honesty, in speculation, in purpose, and in act . . . He had a generous and hearty public spirit. His tastes were only for useful and liberal pursuits. His activity was indefatigable; there was no more danger of his mind being permitted to rust on the eve of fourscore, than in the bloom of life. He was perfectly candid and tolerant; he readily allowed every rightful claim of others, and made no parade of his own; and in his preferences of sect and party, there was no alloy of narrowness or ill-will. It was a pleasure to him to do a service to friend or stranger. He had the kindest affections, an eminently social disposition, and a tenderness of sensibility which is rarely seen to outlast so much experience."

Alden Bradford died in Boston on October 26, 1843. He had been one of eight children. His father was one of a family of ten, his grandfather one of seven, and his great-grandfather one of fifteen. Eight children were born to Alden and Margaret Bradford. But only three of the eight married, and only one of the three, Margaret (Mrs. William Havard Eliot), bore issue. Three of the others, "Uncle Tom," "Aunt Sarah," and "Aunt Lucy Ann," as they were known to the writer's family, lived to an advanced age, rather forlornly, in Boston and Brookline boarding houses, too independent to pool their slender resources.

Bibliography. The following list of Alden Bradford's writings which were published separately, includes several items that have not previously been attributed to him. It is compiled from his

own list of his works, which the Rev. John Pierce copied into his diary, now in our cabinet.

The titles have been collated with copies of the works, most of the anonymous imprints having come down to the writer in a bound volume of pamphlets owned by Alden Bradford, and endorsed as his writings by his grandson, Samuel Eliot.

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A Discourse delivered at Hallowell, at the opening of the Academy in that Place, May 5, 1795. By Alden Bradford, A.M.S.H.S. Pastor of the Church in Pownalborough. Printed by Wait, Robinson & Baker, at the Hook, Hallowell. 1795. pp. 23.

Two Sermons, delivered in Wiscasset, (Pownalborough) on the 9th of May, 1798, which the President of the United States had previously appointed to be Religiously observed as a Day of Humiliation and Prayer throughout the Union. By Alden Bradford, A.M. Minister of the Christian Congregational Society in that Place. Wiscasset: Henry Hoskins & John W. Scott, 1798. pp. 17, 20.

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An Oration, pronounced at Wiscasset, on the Fourth of July, 1804, in commemoration of American Independence. By Alden Bradford. Wiscasset: Babson and Rust, 1804. pp. 19.

A Sermon delivered at Plymouth, December 21st, 1804; the Anniversary of the Landing of Our Fathers in December, 1620. By Alden Bradford, A.M.S.H.S. . . . Boston: Gilbert & Dean, 1805. pp. 24.

A Sermon delivered before the Congregational Society at Thomaston, (Maine) November 2, 1806; being the Lord's Day after the interment of the Hon. Henry Knox . . . By Alden Bradford, A.M.S.H.S. [Wiscasset]: Babson and Russt [*sic*]: *n. d.* pp. 16.

An Address, delivered at the Opening of the Academy, in Wiscasset, (Maine,) November 16, 1807. By Alden Bradford, A.M. S.H.S. Wiscasset: T. Loring, 1808.

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Language of Scripture respecting the Savior in relation to God the Father. By a Layman. Boston, 1815.

Speeches of the Governors of Massachusetts, from 1765 to 1775; and the Answers of the House of Representatives to the same; with their Resolutions and Addresses for that Period. And other Public Papers relating to the Dispute between this Country and Great Britain, which led to the Independence of the United States. Boston: Russell and Gardner, 1818. pp. 424.

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[Binder's title: New England Biography.]

New England Chronology: from the Discovery of the Country by Cabot, in 1497, to 1800 [sic]. By Alden Bradford, LL.D. Boston: S. G. Simpkins, 1843. pp. 202.

A continuation of Prince's Chronology to 1820.

Complete and Authentic History of the Battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775; derived from the best authorities. By Alden Bradford, Esq. Boston: J. N. Bradley & Co., Daily Mail Office,

[1843]. pp. 13. Woodcuts of James Otis and the monument on paper covers.

Several card catalogues err in assigning the date 1825 to this pamphlet. As the preface shows, it is a reprint of Bradford's "Particular Account," on the completion of the monument.